



# Life and Letters Under the Mughals

*By*

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Editor, Indian Gazetteers

"THE HINDU"

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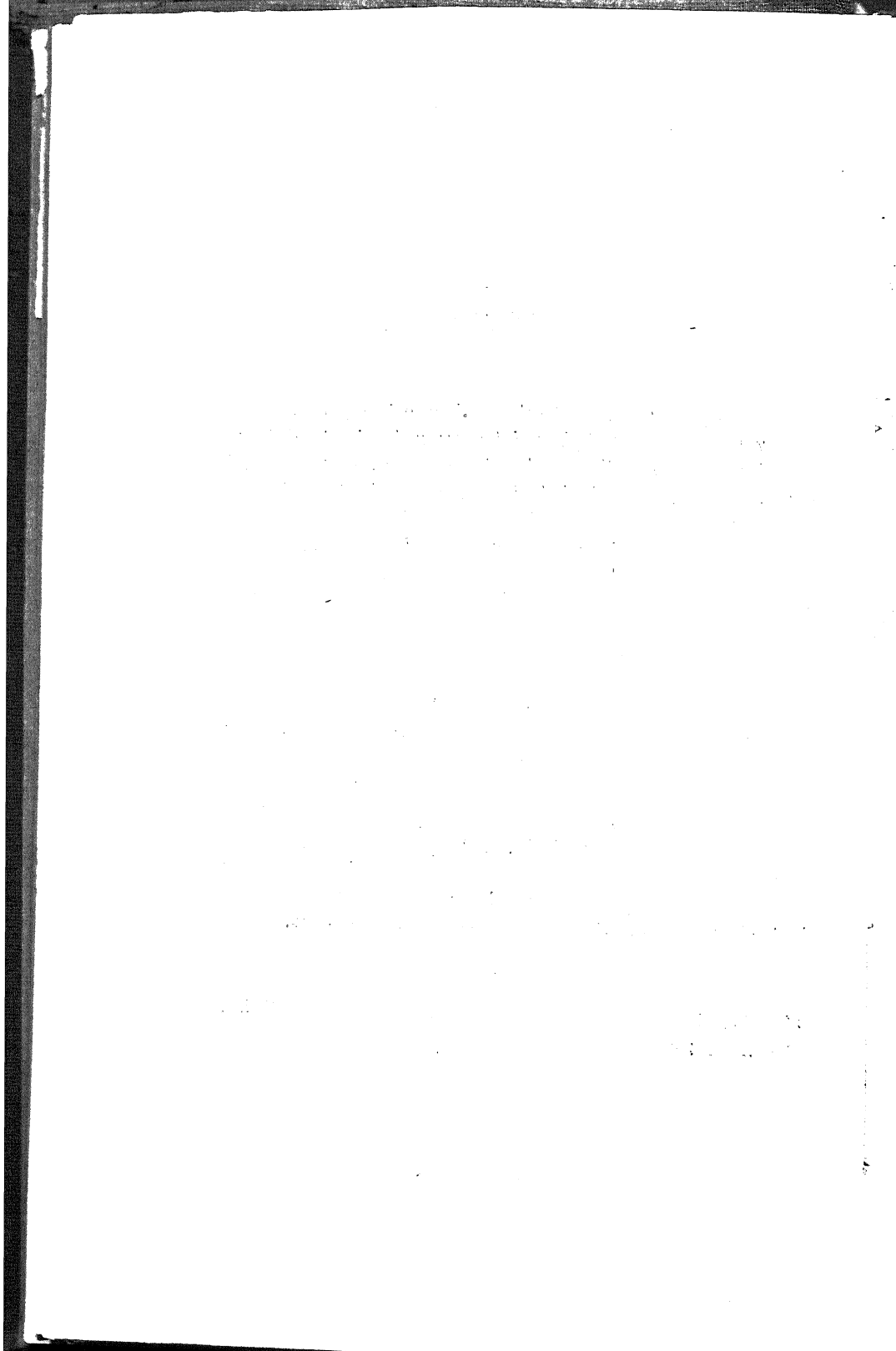
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## Abbreviations

*Ain* : *Ain-i-Akbari*.

*A.N.* *Akbarnama*.

*B.N.* *Babarnama*.

*B.S.O.A.S.* Bulletin of the School of the Oriental and African Studies, London.

*C.A.A.M.* Central Asian Antiquities Museum.

Crooke's or Herklots' *Islam in India* : Reference is to *Qanun-i-Islam* or *Islam in India* by Jafar Sharif, translated by G.A. Herklots and edited by William Crooke.

*E. and D. Elliot and Dowson*, *The History of India as Told by its own Historians*.

*H.N.G.* *Humayunnama* by Gulbadan Begam. Sometimes the abbreviation 'Gul' for Gulbadan Begam is used in the present work.

*H.S.S.* *Hindi Shabd Sagar* by Shyam Sundar Das.

*I.A.E.* Indian Art Exhibition.

*I.N.* *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*.

*J.B.O.R.S.* Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society.

*J.I.H.* Journal of Indian Historical Society.

*J.P.A.S.B.* or *A.S.B.* Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

*J.R.A.S.B.* Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal.

*J.U.P.H.S.* Journal of the United Provinces Historical Society.

*K.K.* Khafi Khan's *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*.

*Lahori* : Abdul Hamid Lahori's *Padshahnama* or *Badshah nama*.

*M.A.* : *Maasir-i-Alamgiri*.

*Pelsaert's India* : Reference is to Francisco Pelsaert's *Remonstrantie*., translated by W.H. Moreland and P. Geyl. In the present work *Jahangir's India* also has been used for Pelsaert's work.

*Purchas' India* : Reference is to Purchas' *Pilgrimes*, 20 volumes.

R. and B. *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, translated by Rogers and Beve-  
ridge.

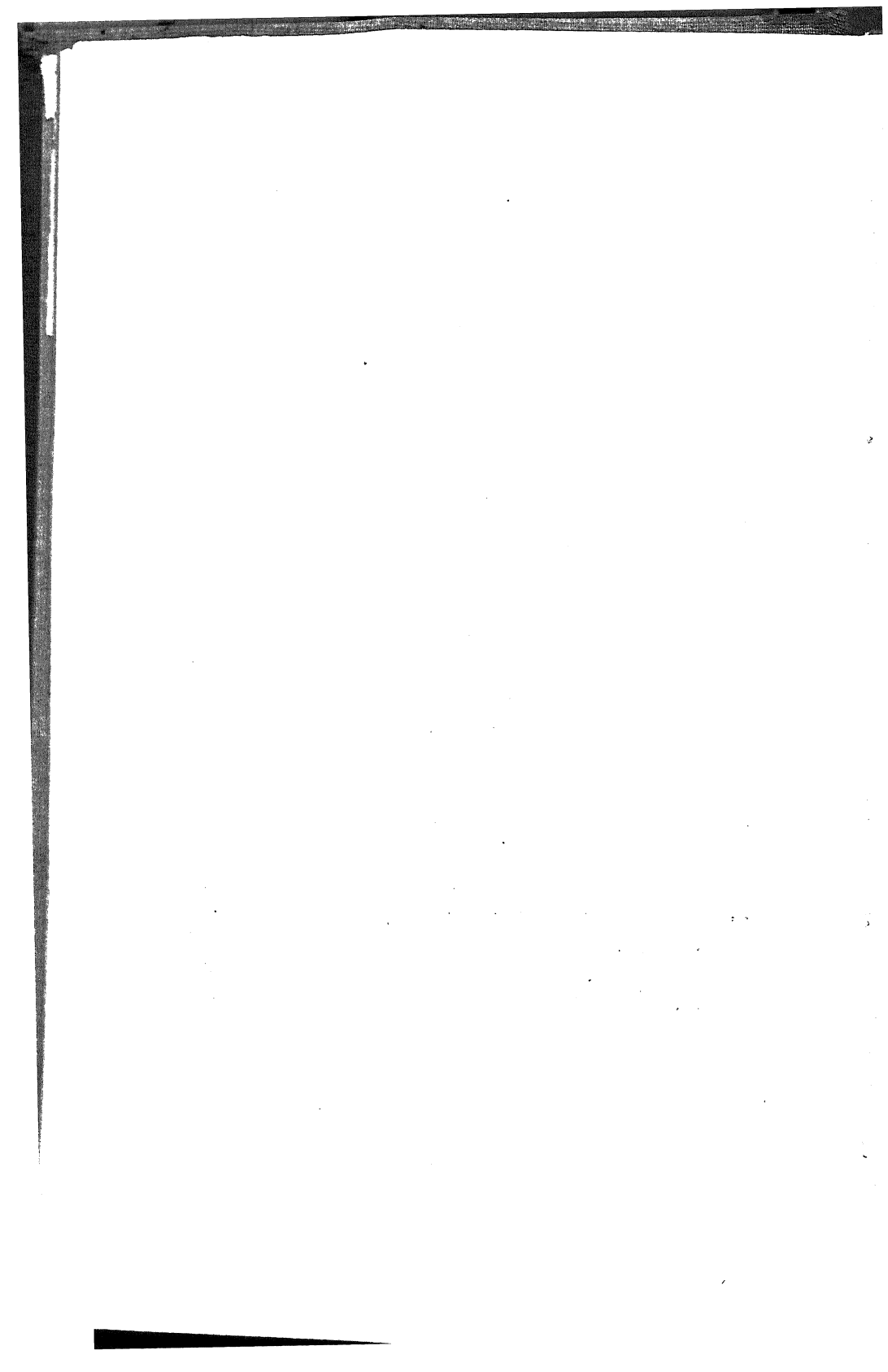
Tuzuk (Lowe) : *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, translated by W.H. Lowe.

T.A. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*.

V.L.H. *Vernacular Literature of Hindustan* by Grierson.

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## Introduction

India inherits an ancient civilization which is the result of diverse forces operating for many millenniums. Many races—Greeks, Sakas, Pallavas, Kushanas, Huns and others—that from time to time found their way to this country contributed consciously or unconsciously to its evolution. It is, therefore, endowed with that dynamic character which explains its exceptional vitality. We possess the will to assimilate whatever appears to us good in the life and thought of the peoples with whom we happen to come into contact. The advent of Islam, however, presented a challenge at the outset to the process of synthesis and fusion that had been going on for centuries in the past. Unlike the earlier invaders, Muslims came to India with a well-defined faith. Simple and clear-cut, Islam had nothing in common with the elaborate, ritualistic and absorptive Hinduism. Its well-defined social system, philosophy, laws and a strong monotheistic outlook made its absorption in Hinduism impossible. Throughout the medieval ages, the problem, as Jawaharlal Nehru put it, was how these “two closed systems, each with its own strong roots, could develop a healthy relationship.”

For seven centuries the struggle for supremacy went on. On the one hand, there was the “influence of Islam and the philosophy of life represented by it. On the other hand, there has been the pervasive influence of Indian culture and civilisation.” The initial clash was inevitably followed by rapprochement, fusion and mutual adjustment.

The Iranian-Arab culture, which the Turko-Afghan conquerors brought with them, was a composite culture, Arabs having absorbed the ancient civilizations of Iran and Egypt and the remnants of the Graeco-Roman civilization. Characteristically enough, the Arabs had accepted in course of time some of



the ancient traditions and legends of these countries as part of their own national heritage.

The idea of the brotherhood of Islam and of theoretical equality among its adherents, belief in one God and complete surrender to His will, which are the characteristics of this religion, made a deep impression on the minds of some of the Indian thinkers and reformers of the period. The contact of Islam with Hinduism in south India led to the revival of anti-caste and monotheistic movements. The south became the "home of religious reform" from the 8th to the 10th century. The Vaisnava and Saivite saints started schools of *Bhakti*, and scholars like Sankara, Ramanuja, Nimbadiya, Basava, Vallabhacharya, and Madhava formulated their philosophical systems. These impulses for re-awakening and religious revival were transmitted to the north chiefly through Ramananda of Banaras, who was a distinguished pupil of Ramanuja. About 1450 the mystic weaver Kabir "assailed at once the worship of idols, the authority of the *Quran* and *Shastras* and the exclusive use of a learned language." It will, however, be incorrect to say that these monotheistic and anti-caste movements among the Hindus in the Middle Ages though strengthened by Islam had originated in it. Indeed the *Upanishads* (8th century B.C.-6th century B.C.) had propounded the idea of the oneness of God. And as Sir Jadunath Sarkar, the Indian historian, remarks, "all the higher thinkers, all the religious reformers, all the sincere devotees among the Hindus from the earlier times have proclaimed one and only one supreme God behind the countless deities of popular worship and have declared the equality of all true adherers and placed a simple sincere faith above elaborate religious ceremonies. They have all tried to simplify religion and bring it to the doors of the commonest people." So what really happened after the Muslim conquest was a "re-emphasis on the essential monotheistic character of the idea of God and the superiority of the path of devotion over ritualistic sacrifice and mere books of knowledge and wisdom." Thus stress was laid on the subordination of rites and ceremonies, pilgrimages and fasts and the multiplicity of gods. The *Bhakti* movement served two main objects. It rescued the Hindu religion and enabled it to withstand the onslaught of Islamic propaganda and proselytism. It also brought about an

understanding between Islam and Hinduism and fostered friendly relations between the two communities.

Many a sect arose which tried to harmonize Islam and Hinduism and to find a common meeting ground for the devout of both the creeds in which their differences of ritual, dogma, and external marks of faith were ignored. Ramananda, Kabir, Nanak, Dadu, and Chaitanya were some of the leaders of the *Bhakti* movement, which practically covered the whole of India. Muslim Sufis and mystics were close to *Bhaktis*. Mainly an off-shoot of Vedanta of the Hindus, Sufism rapidly spread in India from the time of Akbar and produced a large mass of literature. It tended to bring Hindus and Muslims closer.

Interaction of these cultures led to the birth of a new language, *Rekhta* or Urdu (from the Turki word 'Urdu' meaning 'Camp'), as it was called, which was really Hindi appreciably transformed by the addition of Persian and Arabic words and idioms. Amir Khusrau (1255-1325) later called this language *Hindavi* and Abul Fazl named it *Dehlavi*. *Prithvi Raj Ras* by Chand Bardai, a court poet of Prithviraj, was perhaps the first work in Hindi, which distinctly contains the traces of this development. The works of Amir Khusrau and Ras Khan, Malik Muhammad Jayasi's *Padmavat* (completed in 1540), and Tulsi Das's *Ramacharit Manas* (1574) are some of the important earlier works in the new language. However, the religious poems or rather the aphorisms of religious reformers like Kabir (died 1518), Dadu (flourished about 1600), Nanak (1469-1538) and Namdev (14th century) and others, who used it as a medium of expression, greatly helped its growth.

The impact of Islam also led to the development of regional languages. Sanskrit ceased to be a living language even on a limited scale by the end of the 13th century when a major part of this country passed under Muslim rule. For over three centuries (1200-1550) the Hindu intellect in north India was almost barren and no work of merit was produced. The peace and prosperity of Akbar's reign, however, gave a literary stimulus and there was a sudden growth of vernacular literature throughout the country. A number of good works were produced in Bengali, Marathi, Punjabi, Sindhi and eastern Hindi. Vidyapati's songs in Maithili, Chandi Dass' in Bengali, Mira's

poems in Rajasthani, and Eknath's in Marathi were not only popular but recognised literary works. Arabised Persian mixed with Turkish being the language of the Muslim invaders, many of their words found their way into the regional languages. Marathi, for example, had 35% words of Persian origin in 1830 and the percentage in Punjabi and Sindhi was still higher.

Hindus were not interested in recording events, because they "despised this world and its ephemeral occurrences." Only four biographies have been preserved in Sanskrit and in all of them "facts lie buried under a mass of flowers of rhetoric, tricks of style and round-about expressions." Dates are completely ignored. The dry, methodical and matter-of-fact Muslims, on the other hand, kept a regular record of their campaigns and achievements in whatever part of the world they went to. Their advent in India led to the production of a large number of chronicles and autobiographies, which serve as source material for the history of the period. Hindu writers naturally imitated their style, and thus was introduced, as Sir Jadunath Sarkar writes, "a new and very useful element into Indian literature."

The contact of Islam was beneficial in another way. Contrary to the Hindu practice of making a secret of their productions, the Muslims believed in copying and illuminating and circulating their works on a large scale. The introduction of *Kagaz* (paper) also helped this process. Many of the older Indian works were translated under the patronage of Mughal rulers like Akbar, and freely circulated, which led to the diffusion of knowledge.

In the domain of fine arts, the richest contribution of the Muslims, Sir Jadunath Sarkar writes, is the Indo-Saracen School of painting. As the painting of human figures or anything that has life is forbidden in Islam, the earliest Muslim paintings to reach India from Khurasan or Bukhara showed "complete Chinese influence, especially in representing the human face, rocks, sheets of water and dragons." Intense individuality, proper spacing and symmetry were the characteristics of this art. The only specimens of Hindu art, which had escaped the ravages of time and invaders, are those in the Ajanta caves which depict the full throngings of life, power glory, love and youth, and on the same canvas are exhibited tranquillity, which lies in a life of detachment, devotion, piety and faith. The

medium of art was chosen to express "the illimitable fecundity of life" and unity of the real. Here in India, the Chinese characteristics imported by Muslims were rapidly dropped. The rigidity of the Chinese line was softened. The scenes and features were indianized. As a result of the impact of this foreign culture on the traditional art, new laws of symmetry, proportion, and spacing were imposed on the plasticity of Ajanta. It also led to the development of a number of sub-styles, as the Rajput and the *Pahari* styles, which were greatly influenced by ancient Hindu ideals, while the Deccan, Lucknow, Kashmir, and Patna styles of painting had predominantly Muslim characteristics.

The style of architecture which the Turkish invaders brought in India was not exclusively Muslim or Arabian. It was in fact the product of fusion of the style of architecture of various countries such as Transoxiana, Iran, Afghanistan, and Northern Africa with that of the Muslim Arabia. They had developed a good taste and also talent for refinement in architecture. In India they were greatly impressed with the skill of Indian masons and architects whose style they also adopted sometimes unconsciously. Indian architecture had some unique features, such as flat roofs, corbel brackets, tapering domes, wide eaves, narrow columns, and decoration and ornamentation. Moreover, the emphasis of Indian architectural style was on solidity and grace. This is evident in the temples of the south. Hindu kings were very particular about extensive decoration, and variety of themes were exhibited through sculptures. The best examples are the temples of Conjeevaram and Simhachalam. The Muslims had also something to impart to Hindu architecture by introducing certain new features, such as arches, spherical domes, geometrical patterns, and window screenings, which gave a new dimension to architecture. While the Hindu kings spent huge amounts on the building of temples, the Muslims built forts, palaces, mausoleums, and mosques. Indian masons and architects also played an important role in the fusion of these two different styles of architecture by unconsciously introducing decorative and architectural details which they had been practising over the centuries. The synthesis of these two architectural styles led to the evolution of a new school of architecture which is known as Indo-Muslim or Indo-

Iranian. The Taj Mahal is a living monument of the perfect synthesis of these two cultures, while Fatehpur Sikri and the tombs of Akbar and Itmad-ud-Daulah remain specimens of an imperfect fusion. The influence of this style is visible not only in the monumental art of India but also in utilitarian works—houses, streets and bathing places (*ghats*) and even in places of worship.

Music was a well-developed art in India. Islam, which had a sort of religious disliking for it, had not much to contribute, excepting some of the inventions which are attributed to the poet, litterateur and mystic of the time, Amir Khusrau. By combining the Indian *vina* and the Iranian *tambura*, he was able to produce the *sitar*, a very popular Indian musical instrument. *Tabla* is nothing but a modification of the Indian *mridang*. A fusion of Hindu and Iranian systems led to the evolution of light songs like *qawalis*—a counterpart of the religious music of the *Bhakts*.

The cultural influence of Islam is also visible in dress, diet, in the celebration of fairs and festivals, in the ceremonial of marriage, and in the manners of the court. *Achkan* and *salwar*, the popular northern Indian dress, owe their introduction to Muslim influence. Hunting, hawking, *chaugan*, *nard* or back-gamon, and many other games assumed a Muslim character in form and technique. The Muslims, generally leading a more luxurious life than the Hindus, were responsible for setting new fashions which were copied by the richer classes. They were accustomed to sumptuous dinners and sometimes as many as 100 dishes were served on their tables. Abul Fazl enumerates these dishes in his famous work *Ain-i-Akbari*. It naturally led to the introduction of new articles of food and new styles of cookery, which in course of time became completely Indianized.

The immediate result of the Muslim conquest was the rigidity of the caste system. A large number of conversions during this period, sometimes prompted by the desire to have a more affluent life and a higher social status, but often by force and coercion, produced a strong reaction. Brahmans, the priestly class among the Hindus, who had lost their former privileges of exemption from taxes, etc., found in this an opportunity to consolidate their hold by making the caste system rigid. Caste rules were framed in such a way that no loophole was left

for any intrusion by outsiders who were considered *malechhas* or untouchables.

*Purdah*, or the strict veiling of women, was another impact of the advent of Islam in India. Hindus adopted *purdah* as a protective measure to save the honour of their womenfolk and to maintain the purity of their social order. The tendency to imitate the ruling class was another factor which operated in favour of its introduction among the Hindu ladies.

The above review of the impact of Islam on different aspects of life in India shows concretely how the Hindus reacted to a culture very different from their own. Some features of it which added richness and variety to their life were more easily assimilated. They tended to accept in varying degrees those others which impinged on their established pattern of living but not seriously. Where the differences were radical and irreconcilable, they were content to be allowed to follow them quietly side by side with the unacceptable ways of their rulers. Only the forces of time could evolve a pattern of integration in such cases.

We cannot, therefore, say that culture during the medieval times was something entirely new or radically different from the culture of the preceding or succeeding ages. Indian culture in all ages has been fundamentally the same and the new strains have only added to its fabric. They only add richness to it. Take, for example, the dress or the mode of life of the Indian people. Great political upheavals and economic and military revolutions have hardly brought about any radical change in the dress of the mass of our people. Although some new elements, such as shirts and skirts, *achkans* and *salwars* have added to the variety and colour of our costume, the indispensable *dhoti* and the graceful *sari* have continued to be as popular today as they were in the days of the Buddha and Mahavira. The ultra modern person may take pride in his European apparel, but he too relapses at times to the garb of his ancestors when homely comfort or religious conventions so demand. So too with food and drink, mode and style of living, and habits. Seldom have our people except the *elite* taken to European diet. During the Mughal age not many except the nobility and high-ups among the Hindus adopted the food of our rulers. Many of the upper-class and middle-class Hindus, no doubt, borrowed

something of the Mughal dress, language and vocabulary, besides the Mughal mode of life and behaviour, but the masses continued to follow their traditional path. At the same time social customs and personal laws still continued, in varying degrees, to be influenced by religious creeds. The present work is an attempt to portray Indian society in Mughal times in concrete terms in different spheres of our social, literary and cultural life.

## CHAPTER I

# Dress, Toilets and Ornaments

### General

Indian dress is a product of the soil and is eminently suited to the climate and conditions of life in the country. But we have to admit that foreign influence has also played an important part in its evolution. Aesthetic considerations, too, have been responsible for determining our clothing. We have different types of dresses for different seasons of the year, and there are different ways of putting them on, especially for women. The cut or the fashion, once introduced, takes a long time to alter. There is more truth in Orme's observation about us that "the habit has at this day the same cut which it had a thousand years ago."<sup>1</sup> Our medieval dress impressed foreigners, especially European travellers, who spoke highly of the neat and well-fitted costumes of the Bengalis,<sup>2</sup> the Punjabis,<sup>3</sup> and the people of other provinces. The Goanese were said to have excelled all. The rich among them would change their dress everyday and sometimes even oftener.<sup>4</sup> Della Valle writes about the Indian dress : "I was so taken with the Indian dress in regard of its cleanliness and easiness and for the goodly show—I caused one to be made for myself complete in every point and carry with me to show it in Italy."<sup>5</sup>

Poor people of different communities dressed very much alike, and so did the rich. The poor contented themselves with a piece of cloth wrapped round their waist, called *dhoti*, which used to be usually five yards long. The rich imitated the *darbari* (court) dress—an intermixture of Indo-Persian style—consisting of a long coat and tight trousers of Indian make.<sup>6</sup> The head-dress of the poor was a cap, and that of the rich a *puggree*. Hindus, irrespective of their position, wore turbans. According to Della Valle, the nobles changed their



clothes daily.<sup>7</sup> Muhammadans spent lavishly on their dress,<sup>8</sup> particularly their women,<sup>9</sup> and used silk, brocade, etc., according to their position in life.<sup>10</sup> But the orthodox among them abstained from yellow<sup>11</sup> and silken clothes.<sup>12</sup> The historian Badaoni was enraged to see a *mufti* dressed in a "garment of unmixed silk."<sup>13</sup> Muslim ascetics wore a tall *darvesh* cap and wooden sandals, and wrapped themselves in a sheet of unsewn cloth.<sup>14</sup> In Bengal some of the Muslim *faqirs* or *pirs* used black attire.<sup>14+</sup> A simple loin-cloth was sufficient to cover the body of a Hindu *yogi*.<sup>15</sup> Muslim scholars or *ulema* put on a turban, a *qaba* and a *pyjama*. Bernier thus describes the dress of Kavindra-charya, the great Hindu scholar of the time of Shahjahan, whom he met in Banaras: "He wore a white silk scarf tied about his waist and hanging half-way down the leg, and another tolerably large scarf of red silk which he wears as a cloak on his shoulders."<sup>16</sup> Such must have been the dress of other medieval Hindu scholars, except that the poorer among them must have used cotton instead of silk.

### Dress of the Royalty

The Mughal kings were very particular about new fashions and variety in dresses. Humayun invented several kinds of new dresses, particularly the one called *ulbagcha*. It was a waistcoat, open in front and hanging down to the waist over the coat or *qaba*.<sup>17</sup> Akbar, whose aesthetic taste was highly developed, employed skilled tailors to improve the style of the costumes in his wardrobe.<sup>18</sup> Humayun and Akbar generally changed their dresses daily to match with the colour of the planet of the day.<sup>19</sup> Monserrate writes about the dress of Akbar: "His Majesty wore clothes of silk beautifully embroidered in gold. His Majesty's cloak comes down to his hose, and boots cover his ankles completely and (he) wears pearls and gold jewellery."<sup>20</sup> Father Rudolf found Akbar clad in a Hindu *dhoti* of the "finest and most delicate silk falling to his heels and there gathered in by bangles covered with pearls."<sup>21</sup> Sir Thomas Roe describes the dress of Jahangir thus: "On his head he wore a rich turban with a plume of heron's feathers, not many, but long. On one side hung a ruby unset, as long as a walnut, on the other side, a diamond as large, in the middle an emerald like a heart much bigger.

His staff was wound about with a chain of great pearls, rubies and diamonds drilled. About his neck, he wore a chain of three strings of most excellent pearls, the largest I ever saw. About his elbows armlets set with diamonds and on his wrist three rows of several sorts, his hands bare, but almost on every finger a ring. His gloves, which were English, stuck under his girdle. His coat of cloth of gold without sleeves upon a fine raiment as thin as lawn. On his feet a pair of buskins embroidered with pearls, the toes sharp and turning up."<sup>22</sup> Jahangir reserved for himself a particular dress consisting of *nadiri*,<sup>23</sup> *tus shawl*, *batugiriban*,<sup>24</sup> *qaba* of Gujarati *satin*, *chera* and waist-belt woven with silk and interwoven with gold and silk threads. None was allowed to imitate or put on this dress unless it was specially bestowed upon him by the Emperor.

The *Ain-i-Akbari* describes eleven types of coats. *Takau-chiyah* was a coat with round skirt tied on the right side; *peshwaj*, open in front and tied in front; *shah-ajidah* (or the royal stitch-coat) with sixty ornamental stitches; *gadar*, wider and longer than the *qaba*, was used in place of the fur coat, and *fargi* was worn over the *jama*. *Chakman* and *fargul* were rain-coats, the former was made of broad cloth, woollen stuff or wax-cloth.<sup>25</sup> Shahjahan's dress was practically the same as that of his father with the only difference that it was more gorgeous and gaudy.<sup>26</sup> Aurangzeb made an attempt at simplicity.<sup>27</sup>

### Dress of the upper class

The well-to-do classes spent lavishly on their dresses, and wealthy Muhammadans wore both *shalwars*<sup>28</sup> and breeches<sup>29</sup> or tight trousers. *Shalwars* were of three kinds, single, double and wadded,<sup>30</sup> and breeches, though loose round the waist, were invariably tight from the mid-leg to the ankles and were long enough to be plaited.<sup>31</sup> In private they put on *lungis* or loin-cloth.<sup>32</sup>

The shirt was worn by the upper and middle class people and, according to the custom in the East, it hung over the trousers and like the coat was open from top to bottom.<sup>33</sup> The Bengali shirts were usually long,<sup>34</sup> but Pyrard seemed to exaggerate, when he said that these came down to the heels.<sup>3</sup> The people of Goa wore shirts which were also very long.<sup>36</sup>

Some wore narrow waistcoats with sleeves up to the elbows. As a protection against cold in winter they wore over the shirts an *arealuck* (*bandhi*) stuffed with cotton. The outer cloth was either checked or flowered on silk or cotton.<sup>38</sup> A vest called *qaba* was sometimes put on as an upper garment. The rich had it woven with golden threads and other rich stuffs and lined with sables.<sup>39</sup>

The *qaba* or coat, made of a variety of stuffs, was usually long and it came down to the ankles.<sup>40</sup> It was fastened by strings. The Hindus tied the strings on the left side, while the Muhammadans tied them on their right side.<sup>41</sup> The rich also carried over their shoulders shawls of very fine woollen fabric of several handsome colours, and some wrapped them like a scarf.<sup>42</sup> It was the fashion to tie one's waist with a scarf which was sometimes made of beautiful and costly multi-coloured stuff.<sup>43</sup> Men carried arms and fashionable people adorned themselves with a *katari* or dagger fitted with a golden handle set with precious stones.<sup>44</sup> Hindus used to carry a piece of coloured or white cloth over their shoulders and wore pendants in their ears.<sup>45</sup> Golden bracelets were worn by the rich around their wrists.<sup>46</sup> The children generally up to the age of four or five years went naked,<sup>47</sup> but they tied round their waist a silver or gold chain and on their legs wore little bells of precious metal.

### Dress of common people

Workmen, artisans, tillers of the soil and other labourers contented themselves with a cotton *langota*,<sup>49</sup> tied round the waist and reaching down to their knees.<sup>50</sup> Babar writes in his memoirs: "The Hindustanis tie on a thing, called *langota*, a decent clout which hangs two spans below the navel."<sup>51</sup> Abu Fazl remarks: "Men and women (of Bengal) for most part go naked, wearing only cloth about the loins."<sup>52</sup> Nizamuddin Ahmad saw men and women in the Deccan and Golkunda walking about with a "cloth bound about their middle without any more apparel."<sup>53</sup> European travellers from Caemoes to Manucci confirm this view.<sup>54</sup> What the travellers failed to notice was that during winter the common people, except paupers, put on small quilted coats which lasted for years.<sup>55</sup> According to *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, these were never washed till worn out and torn.<sup>56</sup> In northern India even the poor put on turban

to protect their heads from the heat and the cold. Varthema calls it a red cloth head-wear.<sup>57</sup> In the cold weather quilted caps were common in some parts of northern India, especially in Kashmir, the Punjab and the modern Uttar Pradesh.<sup>58</sup>

### Head-dress

Bare-headed persons were little respected in medieval India, and people invariably put on a cap or a turban while stirring out of their houses.<sup>59</sup> This was common with the Muslims as well as the Hindus. The head-dress was not removed in the presence of one's superiors and the traveller De Laet noted that when paying respects to elders "they never take this covering off."<sup>60</sup> Turbans worn by Muslims were usually white and round-shaped, while those of the Hindus were coloured, straight, high and pointed.<sup>61</sup> There were many styles of tying turbans and these differed from caste to caste and province to province.<sup>62</sup> The rich used the finest possible linen for their turbans—25 to 30 yards in length hardly weighing more than 4 ounces.<sup>63</sup> Some got their turbans wrought with silk or gold threads,<sup>64</sup> while others had only one end of the turban interwoven and this they displayed in the front or the top of their forehead.<sup>65</sup> *Kulahs* and Kashmiri caps have also been mentioned in the *Ain-i-Akbari*.<sup>66</sup> These must have been put on by Muslims of upper India. Sometimes caps had as many as ten sides, like those worn in Gujarat.<sup>67</sup>

### Footwear

Stockings were not used by any section of the people.<sup>68</sup> Bernier writes : "Heat is so great in Hindustan that no one, not even the king, wears stockings."<sup>69</sup> However, there is a reference to the use of *mozas*.<sup>70</sup> The general style of the shoes was Turkish,<sup>71</sup> i.e. pointed in front and open above<sup>72</sup> with low heels to be easily undone when necessary.<sup>73</sup> Stavorinus writes : "They have a kind of shoes which are put on slipshod and are turned up before just like the Turkish babooches (babouches)."<sup>74</sup> It was found to be very suitable in the hot climate of the country and could be conveniently taken off when one entered a house. The floors of sitting-rooms were carpeted either with costly rugs or cheaper coverings in medieval times,<sup>75</sup> and it was necessary to take off one's shoes before entering. Muhammadans,

according to Thevenot<sup>76</sup> and Mandelslo,<sup>77</sup> kept the heels of their shoes invariably low and even folded, so that they could be conveniently put on and off. But men of business kept the heels of their shoes high to enable them to walk swiftly.<sup>78</sup>

Pyrard, however, saw Brahmans of Calicut put on brown slippers "much pointed in front, the point raised high with knob of the same leather in winter,"<sup>79</sup> and used wooden slippers in summer.<sup>80</sup> A special type of sandal called *alparcas* was another footwear. It consisted of several leather sides and was fitted with a number of fine gilt leather straps knitted together by means of gilded buckles and fastenings.<sup>81</sup> According to Mandelslo, *alparcas* were wooden shoes "tied up over the instep with straps of leather."<sup>82</sup> The middle-class people used red leather-shoes,<sup>83</sup> worked over with small flowers,<sup>84</sup> while the rich got them embroidered with gold, silver or silk flowers.<sup>85</sup> Some used shoes made of Spanish leather, and the wealthier had them of velvet and brocade.<sup>86</sup> Sometimes Morocco or Turkish leather<sup>87</sup> was also used and was bordered with gold if the wearer was rich. The men of quality had their shoes made of velvet<sup>88</sup> of several colours or of brocade covered with gilt leather<sup>89</sup> and sometimes set rubies, jewels and diamonds on the instep of their shoes.<sup>90</sup> Such shoes were used mostly on wedding occasions.

### Women's dress

Ladies had not many varieties of dresses.<sup>91</sup> The only apparel of the poor womenfolk was a piece of cloth called *sari*, wrapped round the middle part of the body<sup>92</sup> and thrown over the head, and an *angiya* or a small jacket worn round the chest.<sup>93</sup> Babar describes *sari* as "a cloth, one end of which goes round the waist, the other is thrown over the head."<sup>94</sup> One end of the *sari*, usually striped in two colours, was drawn to cover the head.<sup>95</sup> Sometimes it was left over the shoulder to enhance beauty.<sup>96</sup> Hindu ladies liked the red colour best and their clothes were usually striped and dyed in that colour.<sup>97</sup> Della Valle's assertion that ladies of Calicut liked the blue colour<sup>98</sup> is however at variance with Abul Fazl's observations in the *Ain*.<sup>99</sup> Lower-class women in the South did not usually cover their heads. Ferishta writes: "Here in the Deccan and Golkunda men and women do go with a cloth bound about

their middle without any more apparel."<sup>100</sup> Some of the poorest Oriya women could not even afford to provide a piece of cloth and used the leaves of trees instead.<sup>101</sup>

The *angiya* or jacket, covering down to the waist, was used by the rich and the poor alike.<sup>102</sup> Stavorinus<sup>103</sup> and Grose<sup>104</sup> have described it as a pair of hollow cups or cases. Stavorinus writes : "They support their breasts and press them upwards by a piece of linen which passes under the arms and is made fast on the back."<sup>105</sup> A smock down to the waist and a piece of cloth wrapped like a petticoat formed the indoor dress.

Some of the ladies put on half smocks reaching to the waist and made of the finest cotton or silk through which their skin was quite visible.<sup>106</sup> While going out they would put on a silk or cotton waistcoat over the smocks and "tie a sari over the petticoat." The *ghagra*,<sup>107</sup> too, was popular, especially among Muhammadan women. Manucci writes : "Ordinarily they wear two or three garments, each weighing not more than one ounce and worth from rupees forty to rupees fifty each."<sup>108</sup>

Breeches (trousers) and shirts were common among Muhammadan ladies whose breeches did not differ much from those of men,<sup>109</sup> and were tied at the navel by means of a silver or silken string running through them. Some ladies would allow one end of the string to hang down to their knees.<sup>110</sup> The Muhammadan ladies were distinguished by their *shalwars* and shirts with half-length sleeves, the rest of the arm was adorned with precious ornaments.<sup>111</sup> The breeches or *shalwars* were made of cotton, silk or brocade according to the wearer's position in life<sup>112</sup> and were striped in several colours. The rich women put on *qabas* of fine Kashmir wool<sup>113</sup> which were in some cases gathered or plaited a pretty above to make their waist seem short.<sup>114</sup> Some of them also used Kashmir shawls of the finest quality that could be passed through a small finger-ring.<sup>115</sup> Some of the royal ladies, besides having artistic taste, possessed inventive genius. For example, Nurjahan devised many kinds of dresses, fashions and ornaments. Several varieties of brocades, laces and gowns owe their origin to her and are known as *Nur mahali*, *her dudami*, *panchatolia*, *badlah*, *kainari* and *farsh-i-chandni*.<sup>116</sup> Ladies, both Hindu and Muhammadan, covered their heads with a *dopatta*<sup>117</sup> of

fine cotton or silk wrought with silver or gold threads,<sup>118</sup> according to their means, and both its ends "hung down on both sides as low as the knees."<sup>119</sup> Muhammadan ladies, whenever they moved out, put on white shrouds or *burqas*.<sup>120</sup> Hindu ladies adorned their hair with flowers and jewels.<sup>121</sup> *Lachaq* was a superior head-dress reserved only for princesses and daughters of nobles. It was a square mantle doubled into a triangle and fastened at the chin.<sup>122</sup> Some of the princesses put on turbans with the king's permission.<sup>123</sup>

Nobody wore stockings, but precious ornaments were put on the legs over the breeches.<sup>124</sup> Poor women moved about bare-footed.<sup>125</sup> But high class ladies put on shoes of various patterns,<sup>126</sup> and artistic slippers covered with silver and golden flowers.<sup>127</sup> Usually they were of red colour and without backs.<sup>128</sup>

### Soap and Dyes

In modern times articles of toilet have multiplied due to Western inventions, but the common Indian is content with, rather prefers, his old and in many cases more effective make-up products. Thus he has not his soap but soap-berry, bark-ash and pulse-flour powder; and for improving complexion, turmeric-powder, rice-powder, a paste of *kusama* flower, oil-cakes, sandal-wood paste, and various other such-like products are at his disposal.

India had made sufficient progress so far as this aspect of civilization was concerned. Hair-dyes, recipes for the cure of baldness and the removal of hair from the body were known and used even in ancient times.<sup>129</sup> *Wasma* and *khizab* for hair-dyeing were prepared from indigo and other ingredients. Soaps, powders and creams had their substitutes in *ghasul*,<sup>130</sup> myrobalans, *obatanah*<sup>131</sup> and pounded sandal-wood.<sup>132</sup> Soap was known and used in India from ancient times. According to Watt, "The art of soap-making has been known and practised (in India) from a remote antiquity, the impure article produced being used by washermen and dyers."<sup>133</sup> There are frequent references in the medieval Persian literature to the use of *saban* or soap for washing the body and cleaning the clothes. Even the word *saban* or *sabuni* was known in about

Babar's time, as a line of Guru Nanak in "Japji Sahib" clearly states :<sup>134</sup>

मृत पत्नीती कपड़ होय, दे साबुण ओह लइऐ धोय ।

### Perfumes and Oil

Soap is mentioned in the *Ain-i-Akbari* in the following words (about Bisar) : "Lenar<sup>135</sup> is a part of Mekhur<sup>136</sup> division.... These mountains produce all the requisites for making glass and soap."<sup>137</sup> Bocarro in his report on Portuguese forts and settlements in India in 1644 also refers to "sabas."<sup>138</sup> Precious scents of diverse kinds were in use. Kautilya's *Arthashastra* gives a long list of fragrant substances for toilet preparations. The *Ain-e-Akbari's* account of scents is no less detailed. Their prices ranged from half a rupee per tola for *zabad* to 55 rupees per tola for sandal-wood.<sup>139</sup> *Araq-i-sewti*, *araq-i-chameli*, *mosseri*,<sup>140</sup> and *amber-i-ashab*<sup>141</sup> were considered best among the different varieties of perfumes. Akbar had created a special perfumery department called *Khushbu Khana*. Shaikh Mansur was put in charge of it.<sup>142</sup> According to Pelsaert : "They studied night and day how to make exciting perfumes and efficacious preserves, such as *mosseri* or *fal-roj* containing amber, pearls, gold, amboa, opium and other stimulants."<sup>143</sup> Nurjahan's mother prepared a new *itar* from roses and named it *Itar-i-Jahangiri*.<sup>144</sup> Jahangir writes : "It is of such a strength in perfume that if a drop of it is rubbed on the palm of the hand it scents the whole assembly. There is no scent of equal excellence."<sup>145</sup> Lahore,<sup>146</sup> Balsar,<sup>147</sup> Cambaya and Banaras<sup>148</sup> were well known for rare perfumes.

### Men's toilet

Sweet-scented oils of various kinds were exported from Bengal and applied to the hair and also rubbed on the body.<sup>149</sup> How very essential oil was for a bath is clear from the words of Mukundram, a poet of the 16th century. On reaching Gokra, he writes : "My bath was without oil, water only was my drink and food and my infant child cried for hunger."<sup>150</sup> The poor people used cocoanut<sup>151</sup> oil, and the nobles would anoint their bodies with sandal<sup>152</sup> and other oils extracted from various flowers.<sup>153</sup> In Gujarat, according to Barbosa, they anointed themselves with white sandal-wood paste mixed with



saffron and other scents.<sup>154</sup> In hot weather, the rich would add rose-water to keep their skin cool.<sup>155</sup> *Santak*<sup>156</sup> and *argajah* were also used for the same purpose. They used a sweat-powder like that of sandal-wood to get the sweat out of their bodies<sup>157</sup> and head, and "daubed it (head) with oil." Collyrium was used for the eyes.<sup>158</sup> Sur Das laments in one of his verses: "The collyrium does not stay on my eyes, my hands and my cheeks have become dark."<sup>159</sup> Hair-dyes were also freely employed to make one look younger. Muhammadans, who usually kept hair on their upper lips, would not let it grow grey even when old by "combing it continually with lead black combs."<sup>160</sup> Betel was made use of both by men and women to dye their lips red and make them look attractive.<sup>161</sup> It rendered the breath agreeable and also strengthened the gums.<sup>162</sup> Tooth-pastes and tooth-picks were also employed for cleaning teeth.<sup>163</sup> Mirrors were in common use.<sup>164</sup> Combs made of wood, metal or horns of animals were indispensable items of toilet. Hair was kept in proper trim by a piece of cloth called *rumali*.<sup>165</sup>

People in those days were as anxious to look young, bright and beautiful as in our times. Grose rightly observes :

"In short, one must do the Orientalists in general the justice to allow that none are more studious of the cleanliness and suppleness of the body than they are which they not absurdly conceive conduces even to the pleasure of mind."<sup>166</sup>

It is interesting to mention that the Tamilians had developed the art of the cosmetics from very early times. There are frequent references to it in the Tamil works such as *Manimekali*, *Jivakacintamani*, *Silappadikaram*, etc. *Samhita*<sup>167</sup> and *Nikayas*,<sup>168</sup> followed by the *Ain*<sup>169</sup> in the Mughal times, give a long list of the rules of conduct to be observed after leaving the bed early in the morning. It includes both brushing, use of eye and mouth washes, bathing and washing, rubbing, kneading and shampooing, anointing the body with perfume, using collyrium for the eye, using mirror, face-powders, hair-dressing, and betel-chewing. Early in the morning people used then, as now, a *datan* for cleaning and brushing teeth.<sup>170</sup> Besides making them clean and beautiful, it strengthened the gums and the teeth. Mandelso writes : "It is ordinary (usual) to see among them men of hundred years yet

have not a tooth missing.”<sup>171</sup> Other practices were wearing bracelets, carrying walking-sticks, swords or gun-like weapons, umbrella, wearing a turban, a diadem, carrying a fan or *chauri*, and wearing embroidered and fashionable garments. The *Ain* adds for men trimming of the beard, wearing the *jama* fastened on the left side, tying the *mukat*, which is a golden *tiara* work, on the turban, and painting on the forehead the sectarian marks of one's particular caste.<sup>172</sup> Akbar used to spend three *gharis* (a little over one hour) on his body, dress, clothing, toilet, etc.<sup>17</sup>

Bathing was a preliminary requirement both for men and women before starting their daily business. It was a religious duty for Hindus to bathe early in the morning preferably in a river or a tank. Bathing-houses did a flourishing business in all the great cities of the Mughal empire. Some eight hundred were to be found in Agra alone.<sup>174</sup>

Bathing arrangements at such places were very elaborate. After a good bath, the customer was rubbed all over with a hair-cloth, and the soles of his feet with a piece of porous sandstone. Then another man would rub the customer's back<sup>175</sup> from the backbone down to the sides in order to stimulate the blood to flow freely in the veins.<sup>176</sup> In these *hamams*, oils, perfumes,<sup>177</sup> essences of sandal, cloves and oranges were freely applied to the customer.<sup>178</sup> The people kept their feet as clean and soft as their hands. Some of them anointed them with scented oils.<sup>179</sup> These healthy practices are fast dying out in our days.

Barbers kept no shops. They were to be found roaming in streets with a towel on their shoulders and a mirror in their hands.<sup>180</sup> These looking-glasses, according to Della Valle, were made of steel<sup>181</sup> and were round or square in shape.<sup>182</sup> Besides a mirror, barbers were equipped with a razor, a pair of scissors, and a nail-cutter with one end of which they used to clear ears of the wax and with the other end to cut the nails.<sup>183</sup> For all this labour they would not demand more than a pice or two.<sup>184</sup>

Hindus and Muhammadans could be distinguished by the difference in their manner of shaving. The former were usually clean-shaven.<sup>185</sup> Only a small number of them wore small beards with hair turned upward. The orthodox Muslims,

however, kept long beards which usually reached their chests and were trimmed.<sup>186</sup> Moustaches were worn both by Hindus and Muhammadans<sup>187</sup>—Hindus wore them long, and Muhammadans trimmed them in the centre and in the corners. It was a common custom among Hindus to apply *tilak* to their foreheads—a yellow mark<sup>188</sup> of about a finger's breadth. Caste Hindus put on a sacred thread.<sup>189</sup> The rich among them adorned themselves with pendants and necklaces of gold, set with jewels and pearls.<sup>190</sup>

### Women's toilet

Naturally, toilet was regarded as a thing more important for women<sup>191</sup> than for men. Early Tamil works refer to the various cosmetics used by women such as applying of collyrium to the eyelids, oil-bath once in four days, daubing the sandal-cum-saffron paste upon the breasts and shoulders of the young maiden, etc. This paste was prepared by compounding together the sandal-wood powder with medicated camphor and sweet-smelling constituents. The courtesans performed their "ablutions with three varieties of cosmetics such as astringents, aromatics and *omalikai* after which they dried up their dishevelled hair with fragrant smoking and dressed their hair with pomatum." In the *Padmavat* of Malik Muhammad Jayasi there is a detailed description of women's toilet. "They go in for bathing, application of sandal, and vermilion on the parting of hair, a spangle on the forehead, collyrium, ear-rings, nose-studs, betel to redden the lips, necklets, armlets, a girdle and anklets. Then there are sixteen graces, four long, four short, four stout, and four thin."<sup>192</sup> Abul Fazl in the *Ain-i-Akbari* describes 16 items<sup>193</sup> for a woman's toilet which include bathing,<sup>194</sup> anointing, braiding the hair, decking the crown of her head with jewels, sectarian marks of caste after decking with pearls, jewels and gold, tinting with lamp-black like collyrium, staining the hands, eating *pan* and decorating herself with various ornaments, as nose-rings, necklaces, rings, wearing a belt hung with small bells, garlands of flowers, etc.<sup>195</sup>

Girls up to the age of 12 kept only a small tail of hair and made it into a roll on one side of the head. Young girls made their hair into tresses and bound them with ribbons. "Their hair is always dressed, plaited and perfumed with scented oil,"

according to Manucci.<sup>196</sup> Hindu ladies usually tied their hair behind their heads.<sup>197</sup> Sometimes they twisted up the hair upon the top of the head like a pyramid, sticking gold bodkin in the centre.<sup>198</sup> The use of "false" hair also has been referred to.<sup>199</sup> Long hair was considered a mark of beauty.<sup>200</sup> Hindu ladies considered it auspicious to put a vermilion mark and to anoint the painting of their hair.<sup>201</sup> In the South young maidens would daub the sandal-cum-saffron paste upon their breasts and shoulders.<sup>202</sup> They decked their heads with jewels and flowers. Collyrium was used for the eyes. It was usual for high-class ladies to use *missia*<sup>203</sup> for blackening between the teeth, and antimony for darkening their eyelashes. Zeb-un-nisa, who did not use these toilet accessories, was considered a surprising exception.<sup>204</sup> They made strings or collars of sweet flowers and wore them about their necks. Indian women frequently used *mehndi* to give red colour to their hands and feet.<sup>205</sup> It served as a nail polish to redden their finger-nails. They reddened their lips with the betel leaf which served them as a lip-stick.<sup>206</sup> There is also a reference to the use of *gulguna* and *ghaza* (red colour) for painting their faces.

Spectacles called *upalocanagolaka* or *upanetra* in Sanskrit were used not only among the upper classes but also by the middle classes. Perhaps the first reference to the spectacles is to be found in a Gujarati poem "Casimasabda-Satathi-Svadhaya" composed by Somavimalasuri, a Jain poet of Ahmedabad in about 1576 A.D. The word used here is *chasima* or *chasma* which is derived from Persian *chashm* meaning an eye. It would, therefore, seem that it was introduced in India by Persian and Arab travellers who brought European merchandise to India.<sup>207</sup>

Various ornaments, such as nose-rings, ear-rings, etc., adorned their lovely faces. Beautiful and well-adapted robes made them attractive. Orme, with many others, corroborates: "Nature seems to have showered beauty on the fairer sex throughout Indostan with a more lavish hand than in most other countries."<sup>208</sup>

### Women's ornaments

The love of ornaments prompted by vanity is inherent in the human race. A primitive instinct is to make one's person

more beautiful and imposing by ornamentation. Jewellery is not worn only for the purpose of attracting attention, but it satisfies the desire not less deep-rooted in humanity of establishing a distinctive mark of sex, rank and dignity. In India, the use of ornaments has a religious significance both among Hindus and Muslims. It is, for instance, a common belief of the Hindus that at least a speck of gold must be worn upon one's person to ensure ceremonial purity, but for the Muslims these stones and settings have a magico-religious significance.<sup>209</sup> They (Muhammadans) would inscribe on their amulets in Arabic characters the names of the Most High as Hindus draw and venerate the Swastika.

The Indian woman has always been anxious to adorn even load herself with a large variety of bulky ornaments.<sup>210</sup> There was no departure from the traditional custom during the Mughal period.<sup>211</sup> All the travellers agree, and this is confirmed by our experience, that ornaments were "the very joy of their hearts."<sup>212</sup> They would deny themselves other necessities but would not forgo ornaments. It would, however, be a surprise to an Indian of the medieval age to note that in the 20th century our women have practically given up wearing ornaments, but they are still fond of possessing them. Ornaments had to be totally abandoned when a woman unfortunately became a widow.<sup>213</sup>

Ladies were accustomed to the use of ornaments from their very childhood. The ears of both sexes and the noses of girls only were pierced through at a very tender age. Ornaments of gold, silver or brass, according to the means of the parents, were thrust through the pierced holes which grew wider and wider with age.<sup>214</sup> Every child was adorned with a silver or gold chain with bells tied round the waist and anklets round the legs.<sup>215</sup>

Ladies bedecked every limb of their bodies from head to foot with different types of ornaments. Abul Fazl enumerates 37 in his list in the *Ain*. Of the 5 ornaments allotted to the head, *chauk*, called *sisphul* by Abul Fazl, was a raised bell-shaped piece of gold or silver, hollow, and embellished from inside with attachments fastened to the hair over the crown of the head.<sup>216</sup>

*Mang* was worn on the parting of the hair to add to its

beauty. Some adorned their heads with bodkins studded with diamonds. *Kotbiladar* was perhaps the modern *chandraman* worn on the forehead consisting of fine bands and a long centre-drop. According to Manucci, "there hangs down from the middle of their head in the centre of their forehead a bunch of pearls or precious ornaments of the shape of star,<sup>217</sup> sun or moon or flower<sup>218</sup> beset with glittering jewels."<sup>219</sup> On the right side of the star they wore a little round ornament set with a ruby with two pearls on either side. *Sekra*, or *shikhara*, mainly used in the marriage ceremony and on other special occasions, consisted of seven or more strings of pearls linked to studs and hung from the forehead in such a manner as to conceal the face.<sup>220</sup> *Binduli* was another ornament meant for the forehead. Pendants were often worn in the ears. Usually made of gold, silver or copper, they hung down from the ears almost touching the shoulders.<sup>221</sup> *Karnphul* (shaped like the flower *magrela*), *pipal patti* (crescent-shaped), *mor bhanwar* (shaped like a peacock), *bali* or *vali* (a circlet) were the different forms of ear-rings. Usually one big and several smaller rings were worn on each ear.<sup>222</sup> *Champakali* usually adorned the shell of the ear.

Nose-ornaments were unknown in India up to the early medieval period.<sup>223</sup> It seems quite certain that this fashion was brought into India by the Muhammadan invaders from the north-west. Even after its introduction, nose-ornaments were neither in general use in the country nor in the Imperial harems, as is clear from the Persian miniature paintings.<sup>224</sup>

However, it soon became the fashion to put on gold rings ornamented with gems, called *nath*,<sup>225</sup> and *besar*. The former, worn in the nostril, had a ruby between two jewels; *besar* was a broad piece of gold with a jewel attached to its upper end and at the other end was a gold wire clasped on to the pearl and suspended from the nose. The more fashionable ones used a gold or silver nose-pin,<sup>226</sup> of the shape of *laung* or a flower-bud—a small stud of a single diamond or ruby fixed at the corner of the left nostril,<sup>227</sup> which enhanced the beauty of the face.

Around the neck were worn necklaces of gold, pearls and other precious stones which contained five to seven strings of gold beads.<sup>228</sup> Another form of necklace called *haar* was a string of pearls interconnected by golden roses which came

down almost to the stomach. Its centre contained a pendant made of diamonds or other precious stones.<sup>229</sup> *Guluband* consisted of five or seven rose-shaped buttons of gold strung on to silk and worn round the neck.<sup>230</sup>

Arms without ornaments were considered a bad omen. The upper part of the arm above the elbow was ornamented by an armlet, called *bazuband*, usually two inches wide, inlaid with jewels, diamonds, etc. with a bunch of pearls hung down.<sup>231</sup> *Tad* was a hollow circle worn on the arm just below the *bazuband*. *Gajrah*, a bracelet made of gold or pearls, adorned their wrists. *Kangan* was a variety of the bracelet, surmounted with small knobs.<sup>232</sup> *Jawe*, consisting of five barley corns of gold strung on silk, was fastened on each wrist. They decorated their wrist up to the elbow with bracelets called *churis*, usually 10 or 12 in number on each arm.<sup>233</sup> *Bahu* was like the *churi*, but was smaller. They covered their fingers with rings, usually one for each; the rich studded them with diamonds and sapphires.<sup>234</sup> One of these put on the right thumb was fitted with a looking-glass, called *arsi*.<sup>235</sup>

*Chhudr khantika* was an ornamental waist-band fitted with gold bells. *Kati mekhala* was another form of gold belt which was highly decorative.<sup>236</sup> Rings (usually of silver) were worn on toes and fingers.<sup>237</sup> Three gold rings called *jehar* served as ankle ornaments. *Payal*, the ornament of the legs, called *khal khal* in Arabic, was commonly used. It produced an agreeable jingling sound when its wearer moved about.<sup>238</sup> *Ghungru*, consisting of small gold bells, usually six on each ankle and strung upon silk, were worn between the *jehar* and *khal khal*.<sup>239</sup> *Bhank* and *bichhwah* were the ornaments used for the instep. *Anwat* was the ornament to decorate the big toe. The large number of ornaments worn on their feet did not permit wearing a shoe and consequently it was dispensed with.<sup>240</sup>

### Men's ornaments

Men were not accustomed to so much ornamentation as women. Muslims were usually against it except that some of them put on amulets. Hindus, on the other hand, adorned themselves with ear and finger rings.<sup>241</sup> Rajputs<sup>242</sup> considered it a mark of dignity and nobility to put on ear-rings and

bracelets at their elbows. Even common people among the Hindus wore ornaments if they could afford. All the Mughal kings except Aurangzeb adorned themselves with all possible jewellery on important occasions. Sir Thomas Roe relates that Jahangir on his birthday appeared highly attired and laden with ornaments of all sorts :

“His turban was plumed with heron’s feathers ; on one side was a ruby as big as walnut ; on the other side was a large diamond ; in the centre was a large emerald, shaped like a heart. His sash was wreathed with a chain of pearls, rubies and diamonds. His neck-chain consisted of three double strings of pearls. He wore armlets set with diamonds on his elbows ; he had three rows of diamonds on his wrists ; he had rings on nearly every finger.”<sup>243</sup>

Ornaments were usually made of gold or silver but those who could not afford them contented themselves with less costly metals or substances.<sup>244</sup> Samuel Purchas also mentions the use of copper, glass, and tortoise-shell to manufacture these ornaments.<sup>245</sup> According to Abul Fazl, ornaments were also made of a special kind of stone found near Rajgarh in Bihar.<sup>246</sup> Thevenot<sup>247</sup> and Linschoten<sup>248</sup> found that elephants’ tusks or ivory was much used in India, especially in Rajasthan and Cambay where women wore “*manillas* or arm-bracelets made of it.”<sup>249</sup> *Churis* (bracelets) and rings made of *gainda* were highly esteemed.<sup>250</sup> The women of Bengal prized the use of mother-of-pearl in the preparation of bracelets.<sup>251</sup> The rural people satisfied themselves with necklaces made of cloves<sup>252</sup> and of baser metals.

Goldsmiths were always at work designing beautiful patterns. Abul Fazl says that the fee of a skilful artificer was 64 *dams* for each tola.<sup>253</sup> Gujarati Hindus were famous for their workmanship in gold and silver, and according to Manucci, the dealers who “give the orders for this class of work go themselves or send agents to the diamond mines, to the kingdom of Pegu, to the Pescaria Coast or other places to buy the precious stones they required.”<sup>254</sup> The artificers of Cambodia were reputed for their skill in making bracelets of elephants’ tusks.<sup>255</sup>



## NOTES

1. Orme's *Fragments*, p. 410.
2. Rankings' *Historical Researches*, p. 226.
3. Pyrard, II, p. 137.
4. Pyrard, I, p. 376.
5. Della Valle, p. 23.
6. For dresses of nobles refer to various paintings of the period. "Portrait of Raja Birbal," No. 642, I.A.E., lent by Bharat Kala Bhawan, depicts the Raja putting on a *jama* having five sides. A painting, No. 610, I.A.E. lent by Indian Museum, Calcutta, of Jahangir's period, depicts a courtier putting on a turban, *jama*, *kamarband*, breeches of yellow colour and flowery chappals having no back flaps. Paintings numbered 603, 635, and 643, I.A.E., depict various nobles in their attires. All these nobles put on ornaments as pendants, necklaces, *bazubands*, etc. They also carry swords and daggers.
7. Della Valle, p. 456.
8. Mandelslo, p. 64. Some of the Mughal nobles, as Mirza Abu Syed, grandson of Itmad-ud-Daulah, were very fastidious about their dress. Abu Syed would spend so much time in arranging his turban that by the time he was ready, the *darbar* would be over. *Maasir-ul-Umra* (trans.), Vol. I, p. 141.
9. Ovington, p. 320.
10. Mandelslo, p. 63.
11. *M.A.*, Trans. Talab (Urdu), p. 111.
12. Badaoni, II, p. 306. ; Tr., II, p. 316.
13. *Ibid.* Haji Ibrahim of Sirhind was called a wretch by Mir Ali, because the former had issued a *fatwa* legalising the use of garments of red and yellow colour. Badaoni, II, p. 210 ; Tr., II, p. 214.
14. For a contemporary painting of ascetics see "Assembly of *Darveshas*" Mughal, second quarter of 17th century, lent by Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, No. 616, I.A.E.
- 14+. Karim, A., *Social History of the Muslims in Bengal*, Dacca, 1959, p. 193.
15. According to Guru Nanak, a *yogi* weareth ear-rings, a patched coat, carrieth a wallet, a staff and deer's horn. Macauliffe, I, p. 162.

16. Bernier, (1891), p. 341.
17. *Qanoon-i-Humayun*, p. 50.
18. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 88.
19. Badaoni, II, pp. 260-61 ; Tr., II, p. 268.
20. Monserrate, p. 198 ; Della Valle (pp. 456-57) saw the king adorned with many precious jewels.
21. *First Christian Mission to the Great Mogul*, p. 62.
22. *Roe's Embassy*, (1926), pp. 283-84. Also see Manrique, II, p. 198.
23. A long coat without sleeves worn over *qaba* and coming down to the thighs.
24. Coat with a folded collar and embroidered sleeves.
25. *Ain*, I, (1873), pp. 88-90.
26. Painting No. 620 of 1650 A.D. in I.A.E., lent by Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, shows clearly the dress usually worn by Shahjahan.
27. "Alamgir at the Siege of Golkunda" lent by the Rampur State Library, painted by Nadir-uz-Zamani, in early 18th century, shows Aurangzeb dressed in military fashion.
28. *Ain*, I, (1873), pp. 88-90.
29. Mandelslo, p. 64.
30. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 90.
31. Hamilton, I (New Edition), p. 163 ; Pyrard, I, p. 372 ; II, p. 137 ; Della Valle, pp. 410-11 ; Thevenot, Chap. XX, pp. 36-37 ; Ovington, p. 315. Painting No. 550 of 1500 A.D., I.A.E., lent by Sri Ajit Ghose of Calcutta, further illustrates the style of breeches adopted in Mughal days.
32. *Badshanama*, I, Pt. II, p. 273.
33. Thevenot, Chap. XX, p. 36.
34. In recent times the long shirt has been discarded in Bengal and a short one known as the *panjabi* has been universally adopted.
35. Pyrard, I, p. 332.
36. Varthema, p. 46.
37. Mandelslo, p. 51.
38. Thevenot, Chap. XX, p. 36. *Dagla* has also been referred to as an overcoat used during winter. *J.P.A.S.B.*, 1935, I, p. 275.
39. Thevenot, p. 37.
40. Della Valle, p. 410. His description, though detailed, is

- confusing. Pyrard (I, p. 332) and Thevenot compare it to a frock and a gown respectively. *Travels in India in the 17th Century* (Trubner, London, 1873); Mandelslo, p. 51; Hamilton, (New Edition), I, p. 164; Ovington, p. 315; *Storia*, III, p. 39; Stavorinus, I, pp. 414-15.
41. Hamilton, (New Edition) I, p. 164; *Storia*, II, p. 122; Ovington, p. 314. According to Linschoten (I, p. 247), it was considered dignified to tie only the first and the last of the ribbons of the *qaba* while the others were left hanging. Stavorinus, I, pp. 414-15.
  42. Thevenot, Chapter XX, p. 37. Also see Saletore, *Social and Political Life in Vijayanagar Empire*, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 301, for dress of nobles in Vijayanagar.
  43. Pyrard, I, p. 372. Della Valle (pp. 410-12) rightly calls it *kamarband*. Manrique, II, pp. 223-24. Hindus preferred *kamarband* of white muslin (*Storia*, III, p. 39).
  44. Mandelslo, p. 63; Stavorinus, I, p. 457.
  45. Pyrard, I, p. 372.
  46. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 216.
  47. Mandelslo, p. 51; Thevenot, Chap. XX, p. 37.
  48. *Storia*, III, p. 39.
  49. Abul Fazl describes *langota* as a waist-cloth which covers only two parts of the body (*Ain*, III, p. 274). For the dress of a *yogi* refer to Macauliffe, I, p. 162.
  50. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 216.
  51. *B.N.* (Bev), p. 519. See painting of a poor *kisan* clad in *langota* "Harvest Scene" early 17th century, I.A.E., painting No. 602, lent by Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.
  52. *Ain*, II, p. 102. Muslims call it a *lungi*. *Badshahnama* I, Pt. II, p. 273.
  53. *T.A.*, II, p. 100.
  54. Caemoes in Canto VII, Est. XXXVII, quoted in *India in Portuguese Literature*, p. 52, says: "They go unclothed, but a wrap they throw for decent purposes round their loin and waist." *Early Travels in India*, p. 17; Tavernier, II, p. 125; Stavorinus, I, p. 414.
  55. *Ain*, II, p. 351; *J.U.P. Hist. Soc.*, July 1942, pp. 68-69.
  56. *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, (Urdu), p. 106.
  57. Varthema, p. 45.
  58. *J.U.P. Hist. Soc.*, July 1942, pp. 68-69.

59. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 91 ; Petermundy, II, pp. 110-11 ; *J.U.P. Hist. Soc.*, July 1942, pp. 68-69. Mandelslo, p. 53, describes turban as a "coissure". De Laet, pp. 80-81, wrongly calls it a *shash*. It is interesting to note in this connection that among the conditions imposed by the Muhammadan conquerors over the Malayali Sudras (living between Varkala and Vilavankod) was covering of heads by males (V. Nigam Aiya : *The Travancore State Manual*, pp. 312-13).
60. De Laet, pp. 80-81.
61. Pyrard, II, p. 137. Several modes of binding turbans in vogue at that time can be seen in a big painting (about 2½ yards in length and one yard in breadth) of the 17th century "Abdullah Qutab Shah in Procession," I.A.E. The finest muslin known as *malmal-i-shahi* came from Bengal. Extract from *Mohit*, The Ocean, a Turkish work by Sidi Ali Capudan (1554 A.D.) ; *Foreign Notices of South India* by N.A.K. Sastri, Appendix IV, p. 317.
62. Mandelslo, p. 53 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 317.
63. Muslins manufactured in Bengal were so fine that a piece of 20 yards in length and even longer could be enclosed in a common pocket tobacco-box (usually eight inches long and four inches broad and an inch deep), Stavorinus, I, pp. 413-14. Also see Thevenot, Chap. XX, p. 37.
64. Mandelslo, p. 64 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 450 ; Della Valle, pp. 410-12 ; Bernier, p. 240.
65. Varthema, p. 45.
66. *Ain*, I, pp. 88-89 ; *Studies in Indo-Muslim History* by S.H. Hodivala, p. 504 ; Mandelslo, p. 63 ; Thevenot, III, p. 36 ; Ovington, p. 314. Muslim ascetics wore a tall *darvesh* cap as is the custom even now.
67. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 91. It remained the usual head-dress of Muhammadans round about Murshidabad down to the recent times.
68. Thevenot, Chap. XX, p. 37.
69. Bernier, p. 240.
70. *M.A.*, Trans. Talab (Urdu), p. III. Ovington is of the opinion that "the length of their breeches which descend

- to their heels serve them instead of stockings." Ovington, p. 315.
71. Pyrard, II, p. 137.
  72. *Ibid.*
  73. *Travels in India of Roe and Samuel Purchas*, p. 96.
  74. Stavorinus, I, pp. 414-15.
  75. De Laet, pp. 80-81.
  76. Thevenot, Chap. XX, p. 37.
  77. Mandelslo, p. 51.
  78. Thevenot, Chap. XX, p. 37, refers to *baniyas* in particular.
  79. Pyrard, I, p. 376.
  80. Mandelslo, p. 51. Wooden shoes (*kharawan*) are particularly used by the *sannyasis* and orthodox members of the priestly classes who have an aversion to animal-leather. In villages these are most commonly used.
  81. Pyrard, I, p. 376.
  82. Mandelslo, p. 74. Linschoten (Hak. Soc. I. p. 257) also refers to "alparcas" sandal which was quite popular according to the traveller in the Deccan.
  83. Ovington, pp. 314-15.
  84. Thevenot, Chap. XX, p. 37.
  85. Ovington, p. 38.
  86. Mandelslo, p. 51.
  87. Thevenot, Chap. XX, p. 37.
  88. *Storia*, III, p. 39.
  89. Mandelslo, p. 51.
  90. Varthema, p. 48.
  91. For the dress of Rajput ladies refer to Tod (Crookes) II, pp. 58-59.
  92. Tavernier, II, p. 125.
  93. *Ain*, III, pp. 311-12.
  94. *B.N.*, p. 519. Also see Ghurye, *Indian Costumes*, p. 16.
  95. Thevenot, Chap. XX, p. 37. See a painting of the 17th century depicting a woman wearing a *sari*.
  96. Grose, I, p. 143.
  97. *Storia*, II, p. 341.
  98. K.A.N. Sastri, *A History of South India*, p. 314.
  99. *Ain* (Sarkar), III, pp. 322-23.
  100. Ferishta, II, p. 100. Fitch saw women in Tanda, Sonargaon, etc., all naked except a cloth round the waist. Fitch

in *Early Travels in India*, pp. 22, 29. For observations of an early Arab traveller, Abu Zaid, refer to K.A.N. Sastri, *Foreign Notices of South India*, p. 128. For dress of ladies of Vijayanagar refer to Saletore, *Social and Political Life in Vijayanagar*, Vol. II, pp. 178-79.

101. *Ain*, II, p. 126.
102. *Ain*, III, pp. 311-12.
103. Stavorinus, I, p. 415.
104. Grose, I, pp. 142-43.
105. Stavorinus, I, p. 415.
106. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 384.
107. For a beautiful shirt worn by rich ladies, see Art. No. 704, I.A.E. It is embroidered with peacock and floral sprays in yellow field and floral meanders on edges, effective colour scheme. Kutch, end of the 18th century. Painting No. 670, I.A.E. shows a woman in *ghagra*.
108. *Storia*, II, p. 341.
109. Della Valle, p. 411.
110. Mandelslo, p. 50, remarks that it came down to the feet. It seems exaggerated.
111. Thevenot, Chap. XX, p. 37.
112. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 90.
113. *Storia*, II, p. 341.
114. Hamilton, I, p. 164.
115. *Storia*, II, p. 341.
116. *History of Jahangir*, p. 183; K.K., I, p. 269; *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 510.
117. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 90.
118. Mandelslo, p. 64.
119. Della Valle (p. 401) says they were made of white calicoes.
120. Hamilton, I, p. 164; De Laet, pp. 80-81; Mandelslo, p. 50; Tavernier, III, p. 181.
121. Grose, I, p. 143.
122. *Humayunnama*, Gul, p. 138.
123. *Storia*, II, p. 341. Painting No. 650, I.A.E., 18th century, shows Rupmati wearing a turban. See another painting of "Chand Bibi and Her Maidens" Deccani, early 17th century, No. 659, I.A.E. in which are seen some of these maidens with turbans on.
124. *Storia*, II, p. 40.

125. *Ibid.*
126. Thevenot, Chap. XX, p. 37.
127. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 384.
128. See I.A.E., Painting No. 519 of 1720 A.D.
129. See *Atha Kesaranjanam Slokas* 3055-3072, Ed. Peterson, Vol. I, Bombay, 1888. In the Tamil *Kavyas Manimekalai*, *Silappadikaram*, and *Perunkadai* cosmetics have been treated as a standardised art. *Journal of Sri Venkatesvara Oriental Institute*, Vol. VII, 1946, pp. 22-23. Also see an article on "Toilet" in *Indian Culture*, 1934-35 for various hair-dyes and prescriptions for cure of baldness, etc. Also see Amir Khusrau's ridicule of the dyeing of hair. *Matla-ul-Anwar* of Amir Khusrau, Lucknow, 1884.
130. A liquid soap. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 75.
131. It is rubbed over face and other parts of the body to clean and make them look brighter and lovely. Usually its composition is scented-oil mixed with butter, flour and some colour.
132. *A Collection of Voyages undertaken by the East India Co.*, p. 218 ; *Ain*, I, (1873), pp. 75-76.
133. *The Commercial Production of India*, 1908, p. 819. Dalgado records the names for soap in Asiatic languages including Indian vernaculars and other languages as *sabun* (Persian), *sabon* (Arabic), *sabun* (Turkish), etc. *Influence of Portuguese Vocables in Asiatic Languages* (G.O. Series, Baroda, 1936), pp. 314-15.
134. *Madhyayugina Charitra Kosa* by Chitray, p. 483—Nanak ; Kohli, S.S., *A Critical Study of Adi Granth* New Delhi, 1961, p. 131. *Visva-Bharati Annals*, Vol. I, 1945, p. 122. Also see Rashid, A., *Society and Culture in Medieval India*, p. 55.
135. *Indian Companion* by G. H. Khendekar, Poona. 1824. Loner is in the Buldana district of Berar.
136. *Ibid*, p. 169. Mekhar is 14 miles from Buldana.
137. *Ain*, Gladwin, I, p. 348.
138. MS. in India Office, No. 197, of B.M. Solan, MS. Bocarro XIII, p. 588. Marathi poet Muktesvara (1599-1649 A.D.) refers to the word *saban*. Art. in Poona Orientalist, July to October 1946, Vol. XI, Nos. 3 to 4.
139. *Ain*, I, (1837), pp. 75-77.

140. A falroj containing amber, pearls, gold, opium and other stimulants. Pelsaert's India, p. 65.
141. A product of zabad, musk and agar.
142. *T.A.*, II, p. 494.
143. Pelsaert's *India*; p. 65. Barbosa refers to the liberal use of white sandal-wood, aloes, camphor, musk and saffron, all ground fine and treated with rose-water, by the people of the South. Barbosa, I, pp. 205-7, quoted in Saletore, *Social and Political Life in Vijayanagar Empire*, Vol. II, p. 303.
144. *Tuzuk*, Rogers, I, p. 271. *Waqyat-i-Jahangiri* mentions that Nurjahan's mother conceived the idea of collecting the oil by heating rose-water and the experiment was successful. According to Manucci, Nurjahan got all the reservoirs in the garden filled with rose-water. Next day she found a film of oil had come over its top and had a very sweet smell. *Storia* I, pp. 163-64.
145. R. & B., I, p. 271.
146. Monserrate, p. 160.
147. *Ain*, II, p. 243.
148. Purchas, II, p. 66 ; and for Cambaya, Thevenot, p. 12.
149. Pyrard, I, p. 243.
150. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 63.
151. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 447 ; *Storia*, II, p. 430.
152. *Ain*, II, p. 126.
153. *Ain*, I, p. 75. Gandhasara of Gangadhara and Gandhavada with Marathi commentary describe in detail the method of preparing Champaka oil and Champaka flower was used in the manufacture of oils, powders, etc. Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Vol. VI, 1945, p. 155.
154. Barbosa, I, pp. 113, 141.
155. Pelsaert's *India*, p. 65.
156. Product of civet, chuwah, chambeli's essence and rose-water.
157. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 447 ; *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 81.
158. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 75. In Tamil medical treatises, application of collyrium to the eyes once in every three days and oil-bath once in four days was prescribed for the main-



- tenance of healthy life. J. Venkatesvara Oriental Institute, Vol. VII, 1946, p. 25.
159. *History of Hindi Literature* by Keay, p. 75.
  160. Della Valle, p. 376. He adds : "But they let the hair of their chins grow long and large which make many grey-bearded amongst them."
  161. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 180 ; Careri, pp. 205-6.
  162. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 72.
  163. Badaoni, III, p. 315 ; Tr., III, p. 436.
  164. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 447. *Padmavat* translation by Grierson, p. 42. Here the reference is to a mirror in the hand of Nagamati. The price of a looking-glass has been mentioned as £5 by Hamilton. Hamilton I, p. 119. *Tabqat*, II, p. 685 also refers to a mirror made by Mir Fathullah Shirazi.
  165. *Storia*, III, p. 38.
  166. Grose, I, pp. 113-14,
  167. Cikitsasthana, Chap. XXIV, Eng. translation by K.L. Visagratna. Article in *Indian Culture*, "Toilet", pp. 651-66, by G.P. Majumdar.
  168. *Khuddaka Patha* with commentary—Smith P.T.S., 1951, pp. 1-37.
  169. *Ain*, III, pp. 311-12.
  170. Careri, p. 168 ; Badaoni, III, p. 300 ; Tr, III, p. 414. Tavernier's remarks are worth quoting : "It is the custom of Indians to cleanse and scrape their tongues every morning with a crooked piece of a root (*datan*) which causes them to void a great quantity of flegm and rhume, and provokes vomiting." Tavernier, Chap. VI, p. 44.
  171. Mandelslo, p. 85.
  172. *Ain*, III, pp. 311-12.
  173. *A.N.*, III, p. 257 ; Tr., III, p. 373.
  174. Mandelslo, p. 36. *A New History of East Indies*, I, p. 298. For a public-bath scene (Bihizad 1495) see plate XVII in "Influence of Islam on Indian Culture." Warm baths were resorted to by upper classes in northern India. Nicolo Conti in *Travels in India in the 15th Century*, p. 29.
  175. "Both Moors and Gentoos are, however, extremely fond of this practice and it is so common that it would be hard

- to find a barber-native who is not skilled in it as one of the essentials of that profession." Grose I, pp. 113-14. For a detailed description see *Ibid*.
176. Mandelslo, p. 45.
  177. Mukundram mentions *ghani* or the oil-pressing machine. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 158.
  178. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 450.
  179. Della Valle, pp 376-77.
  180. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p 450.
  181. Della Valle, pp. 376-77. In fact these were made of brass or gem. India began to import foreign European glasses from 1550 A.D. onwards. *Journal Bharatiya Vidya*, VII, p. 159.
  182. Grose I, pp. 113-14.
  183. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 450.
  184. Ovington, p. 321.
  185. Barbosa, I, p. 113. "Hindus shave the whole head except a tuft around the crown." De Laet, p. 80.
  186. Mandelslo, p. 63; Pyrard, I, p. 280. For the style of *qalams* see painting No. 606, Jahangir period, 1625, Treasurywala collection, Vol. I, No. 1, p. 56, lent by C.A.A. Museum. See painting No. 401 of Maharaja Gaj Singh (1700 A.D.). The orthodox Aurangzeb, according to Manucci, posted barbers and tailors at the gate of the royal palace to cut off the extra length of beard and *pyjamas* not approved of by the *Shariat*. *Storia*, II, pp. 7-8.
  187. Mandelslo, p. 50. For the observation of an Arab traveller, Abu Zaid, a few centuries before our period, refer to K.A. Nilkanta Sastri, *Foreign Notices of South India*, University of Madras, 1939, pp. 126-27.
  188. It is made with water and sandal-wood to which they add 4 or 5 grams of rice. Mandelslo, p. 51. *Early Travels in India*, p. 96. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 447.
  189. *B.N.*, p. 561, f.n.
  190. Mandelslo, p. 51.
  191. For photo of a woman at her toilet see *Civilization of India Series*, p. 384. For contemporary paintings of ladies at toilet see "A lady at the toilet with attendant,"

- painting No. 514, I.A.E., early 18th century. Another numbered 505, I.A.E. is of late 17th century.
192. Canto XXIII of *Padmavat* from *J.A.S.B.*, 1893, Part I, p. 179, Article by G. A. Grierson on *Padmavat*.
  193. Tamil Kavyas, Salamadikahan and Parunkadai, make mention of 64 arts in which the courtesans of those days were well versed.
  194. After oil-bath, the women in the South cleaned the body with a paste prepared out of the dried-flower petals of vellilottiram compounded with sandal-wood pulp. There are frequent references to the use of turmeric by the women of all classes of Tamilian society. *Journal of Venkatesvara Oriental Institute*, Vol. VII, 1946, pp. 29-32. For Tamilian cosmetics refer to *Ibid*.
  195. For women bathing, 17th century—Bodelian MS., Plate LXXIII. *The Arts and Crafts of India and Pakistan* by Shanti Swarup, Taraporevala, Bombay, 1957.
  196. *Storia*, III, p. 40. In most of the paintings of the period the well-to-do women are shown to dress their hair as to let some curled hair hang loose before the ear. Painting No. 633, I.A.E., late 17th century, lent by Rampur State Library.
  197. *Travels in India in the 17th Century* p. 182.
  198. *Travels of Nicoloa Coate in India in the 15th Century*, p. 23.
  199. Saletore, *Social and Political Life in the Vijayanagar Empire*, Vol. II, p. 302.
  200. Mandelslo, p. 50. He praises the Gujarati ladies for their long hair.
  201. *Early Travels in India* by Foster, p. 22 ; *Padmavat*, translation by Grierson, p. 52, f.n.
  202. *Journal of Venkatesvara Oriental Institute*, Vol. VII, 1946, pp. 25-26.
  203. *Padmavat*, translation by Grierson, p. 569.
  204. *Dastur-ul-Amal*, p. 14, in *Diwan of Zeb-un-Nisa* by Magan Lal, Introduction, p. 8.
  205. Leaves of a plant pounded and formed into a paste by mixing with water. *Storia*, II, p. 340. In the South, the women used *alattakam* to add reddish charm to their feet.

- Journal of Venkatesvara Oriental Institute*, Vol. VII, 1946, p. 28.
206. The ingredients of the betel in the South were, tailed pepper, cardamam, clove, nutmeg, medicated camphor which yield a reddish tinge to the lips. Tamilian Cosmetics, *Journal of Venkatesvara Oriental Institute*, Vol. VII, 1946, p. 33. Majith is the dark red madder-dye. *Panmavat*, p. 107, f.n. Amir Khusrau rebukes the middle-aged women who tried hard to retain their diminishing beauty by painting their eyebrows, powdering their faces and putting antimony in their eyes. *Matla-ul-Anwar* of Amir Khusrau, 1884, pp. 186, 194.
207. For details refer to *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Vol. XXXI, 1950. pp. 285-86.
208. Orme's *Fragments*, p. 438 ; Pyrard, I, pp. 380, 332.
209. "The primary intention in wearing ornaments is to secure protection against evil eye." Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 313.
210. For ornaments of women and their photos see Rothfeed's *Women of India*, pp. 189-94. Also see *Indian Jewellery*, by Col. Hendley. A painting of the late 17th century and numbered 633, I.A.E., lent by Rampur State Library shows "A lady seated on a terrace." She is adorned with all possible jewellery. For another painting see a painting numbered 510 I.A.E. "Nayika Subject", 1720 A.D. Another painting numbered 514 I.A.E. may also be mentioned.
211. Ovington, p. 320.
212. Ovington, p. 320 ; *First Englishmen in India*, p. 76 ; *Storia*, III, p. 40.
213. *Storia*, III, p. 40.
214. Terry in *Early Travels*, p. 323 ; *Storia*, III, p. 40.
215. Samuel Purchas' *India*, p. 76.
216. *Ain*, III, (J. N. Sarkar), p. 343.
217. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 384.
218. *Storia*, II, pp. 339-40.
219. Ovington, p. 320.
220. *Ain*, III, pp. 313-14. For a list of 37 ornaments as narrated by Abul Fazl see *Ain*, II, pp. 314-16.
221. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 384 ; Ovington, p. 320.

222. Hamilton, I, p. 163 ; Thevenot, III, Chap. XX, p. 37.
223. There is no reference to *nath* or nose-ornaments in the pre-Muslim literature. All paintings and sculptures of the Hindu period totally ignore this ornament. *J.P.A.S.B.* (N.S.), XXIII, 1927, pp. 295-96.
224. The paintings in the Razm Namah in Jaipur State Library show no nose-ornaments. *J.P.A.S.B.* (N.S.), XXIII, article of N.B. Divatia on nose-ornaments.
225. Thevenot, Chap. XX, p. 37 ; De Laet, p. 81 ; Mandelslo, p. 50. In some contemporary paintings ladies are depicted without nose-ornaments as shown in number 409 I.A.E., while in others (numbered 519 and 514 I.A.E.), the ladies are shown without *naths* in their noses.
226. Petermundy, II, p. 192.
227. *Ain*, III, pp. 312-14 ; *Indian Jewellery* by Col. Hendley, p. 84, Plate 63.
228. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 184.
229. *Ain*, III, p. 313 ; Storia, II, pp. 339-40.
230. Pyrard, I, p. 380.
231. Storia, II, p. 340.
232. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 184.
233. *First Englishmen in India*, p. 76 ; Pyrard, I, p. 377.
234. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 184.
235. Storia, II, p. 340 ; Thevenot, XX, pp. 37-38.
236. *Ain*, III, p. 313.
237. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 184. The prohibition against wearing gold upon the feet was in vogue among the Hindus in all parts of the country. *Women in India*, p. 191.
238. Hamilton, I, p. 163. They put on their legs valuable metal rings. Storia, II, p. 340. Thomas Herbert's *Travels*, p. 38.
239. *Ain*, III, p. 313.
240. Fitch in *Early Travels*, p. 223 ; Ovington, p. 320 describes a lady fully loaded with ornaments.
241. *Ain*, II, p. 126 ; Pyrard, I, p. 372 ; Hamilton, I, p. 163. On special occasions Hindus liked to put on necklaces.
242. Rajput paintings and their traditions corroborate it. There is an unfinished drawing of a *darbar* of Shahjahan in British Museum by Anuj Chaton. Here we see a young

- Rajput wearing pearls in his ears. *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Second Session, Allahabad, 1938, p. 346.
243. Quoted in *Indian Jewellery*, pp. 10-11. For the ornaments worn by Akbar and Aurangzeb refer *Ibid*.
244. Bernier, p. 224.
245. Purchas' *India*, p. 10.
246. *Ain*, II, p. 152. The stone resembles marble.
247. Thevenot, p. 12.
248. Linschoten, II, p. 3.
249. Hamilton, I, p. 129.
250. Petermundy, II, pp. 171-72.
251. Linschoten, II, p. 136.
252. Pelsaert's *India*, p. 25.
253. *Ain*, III, p. 314. According to Stavorinus (Vol. I, pp. 412-13), these goldsmiths were taken from the market to the customer's house where they worked sometimes on daily wages, but usually charged according to labour and pattern.
254. *Storia*, II, pp. 339-40.
255. Purchas, *His Pilgrimes*, X, p. 93. These bracelets were also called *mawn*.

## CHAPTER 2

# Diet, Tastes and Intoxicants

### Restrictions on meat diet

The daily food of the common people, Hindu and Muslim, was essentially the same except that meat, a popular dish with the latter, was abhorred by most of the Hindus of central and southern provinces on sentimental grounds.<sup>1</sup> Pelsaert's remark that "they (Hindus) know little of the taste of meat" and "never take anything that has blood"<sup>2</sup> is applicable to Jain, Brahman,<sup>3</sup> Vaish and some other castes in Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Central Hindustan. In the Punjab and Bengal even Brahmans ate meat and fish and Rajputs all over the country were accustomed to animal diet.<sup>4</sup> The Hindu masses were vegetarian from habit and economic necessity. It is interesting to note in this connection that some of the Mughal kings did not encourage the eating of meat. They even prohibited the killing of animals on certain days which they regarded as sacred.<sup>5</sup> Humayun gave up the flesh of animals for some months from the date of his start on the campaign for the re-conquest of India until his capture of Delhi. He seems to have been of the considered opinion that beef was not a fit food for devout persons.<sup>7</sup> Akbar did not like meat and took it only occasionally to "conform to the spirit of the age."<sup>8</sup>

Later on, according to Badaoni, the Emperor gave up meat altogether and would not take even garlic and onions.<sup>9</sup> Though very fond of flesh, Jahangir kept up the traditions of his father to a certain extent and stopped the slaughter of animals on Sundays<sup>10</sup> and Thursdays.<sup>11</sup> Swine's flesh was a forbidden food for the Muhammadans.

### Sweet, Fruits and Drinks

For Muslims, cooked and tasty food was available in

the markets of big cities like Delhi, Lahore and Agra.<sup>12</sup> Both vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes of several kinds were always kept ready for customers.<sup>13</sup> Manrique and Bernier have described these bakers' shops, and the things available there. An entire street in Agra was occupied by skilful sweetmeat-sellers "who proved their skill by offering wonderful sweet-scented dainties of all kinds which would stimulate the most jaded appetite to gluttony."<sup>14</sup>

Muslim nobles were accustomed to sumptuous meals. Normally, if we are to believe Sir Thomas Roe, twenty dishes at a time were served at the tables of the nobles,<sup>15</sup> but sometimes the number went even beyond fifty.<sup>16</sup> It is said that "exclusive of water and fuel, Abul Fazl consumed 22 seers of food daily."<sup>17</sup> Asaf Khan was also said to have been able to digest one maund Shahjahani of solid food. Akbar took keen interest in bakery and had the best material brought for his kitchen.<sup>18</sup> *Sukhdas* rice from Bharaij; *dewzirah* rice from Gwalior, *jin-jn* rice from Rajori and *nin:lah* ghee from Hissar, ducks, water-fowls, etc. from various places, and certain vegetables from Kashmir used to be brought for the royal kitchen.<sup>19</sup> Experienced cooks were recruited from various countries to prepare all kinds of grains, greens, meats, and also oily, sweet and spicy dishes. Sweetmeats<sup>20</sup> and fresh and dried fruits were freely enjoyed by both the communities. Moreland's view that "travellers say nothing to indicate that sweetmeats were, as now, a staple food,"<sup>21</sup> is based on an erroneous assumption. Tavernier clearly states: "Workmen return from business and according to the custom they make no supper; they eat some sweetmeats and drink a glass of water."<sup>22</sup> Le Blanc, a traveller to the Indies in the 17th century, writes: "The Bengallian live much on preserves, sweetmeats and spices." According to Della Valle, Hindus lived on butter, cheese, milk, bread and sweetmeats of which they prepared great varieties "by reason of their great abundance of sugar."<sup>23</sup> Manrique saw a bazar in Agra which contained no other shop but of sweetmeat-sellers.<sup>24</sup> Bernier also saw many confectioners' shops in Delhi.<sup>25</sup> The seasonal fruits, such as mangoes, blackberries, oranges, cucumbers, guavas, dates, figs, grapes, etc., were in abundance and were enjoyed by the rich and the poor alike. Fruits were imported in large quantities even from foreign countries, but



being dear they were used only by the rich. According to Bernier, "Nothing is considered so great a treat, it (fruit) forms the chief expense of the *Omrahs*," and he goes on to cite the instance of his *Agah* who would not mind spending twenty crowns for his breakfast alone.<sup>26</sup>

Varieties<sup>27</sup> of fruits from Persia and Kashmir, melons from Karez, Badakashan and Kabul, grapes, pears and apples from Samarkand, sweet pomegranates from Yazd,<sup>28</sup> pineapples from Europe,<sup>29</sup> cherries from Kabul adorned their dining-tables. Jahangir also corroborates thus: "In the reign of my father many fruits of other countries could be had. In the bazars of Lahore every kind and variety that may be desired can be had in the grape season." Bernier was amazed to see the great consumption at Delhi of fresh fruits imported from foreign countries, such as Samarkand, Balkh and Persia.<sup>30</sup> They were available throughout winter.<sup>31</sup> Dry fruits included cocoanuts, dates, *makhana*, *kaulgattah*, walnuts, almonds, pistachios, etc.<sup>32</sup> Fresh water seems to have been the only drink at meals.<sup>33</sup> Mughal kings and some of their nobles were accustomed to the use of the Ganges water.<sup>34</sup> It was considered very pure and wholesome. The well-to-do would use ice in summer.<sup>35</sup> Saltpetre was also used for cooling water.<sup>36</sup> Rose-water, *sharbat* and lemon juice mixed with ice were also used by the rich.<sup>37</sup>

### Diet of the common people

The common people, both Hindus and Muslims, could ill afford to spend on rich and dainty dishes and contented themselves with simple food.<sup>38</sup> *Khichari*, the most popular dish of this class, has been referred to by almost all travellers.<sup>39</sup> Pelsaert describes it as composed of green pulse mixed with rice and cooked with water over a little fire. Usually a little butter and salt were added to it.<sup>40</sup> Rice formed the chief, if not the only, food of the people of the South. The Gujaratis lived mainly on rice and curd.<sup>41</sup> There was some variety in the meals taken by the Kashmiris which instead consisted of boiled rice and boiled salted vegetables,<sup>42</sup> chiefly a leafy plant called *karam*. They added *achars* (pickles), if available.<sup>43</sup> Rahim in his *Social and Cultural History of Bengal* wrongly asserts that Hindus were not aware of the preparation and use of *achars*. Mango-pickle was quite popular in North India before the

advent of the Muslims.<sup>43\*</sup> It was usual with Indians of all classes and communities to take betel after their meals. The rich would mix with it costly spices.

Wheat, however, was the primary food of the people of the North who ate *chappatis* of wheat or barley flour dipped in a little butter.<sup>44</sup> As Abul Fazl writes, the staple food of the generality of the people in the morning was limited to *jawar* or *bajra*<sup>45</sup> flour kneaded with brown sugar and water.<sup>46</sup> We cannot accept De Laet's view that there was only one regular meal in a day,<sup>47</sup> in the face of what Abul Fazl and other contemporary writers say. The people managed to have light refreshments in the afternoon in the form of some parched pulse or other grains.<sup>48</sup> The middle class, comprising shopkeepers, traders, merchants, brokers and bankers, was well off. They took their meals thrice daily—at 8 or 9 in the morning, 4 or 5 in the afternoon and 8 or 9 at night.<sup>49</sup>

#### Diet of upper and middle classes

The middle and upper classes<sup>50</sup> invariably used wheat flour, boiled rice and cooked vegetables of various sorts.<sup>51</sup> *Puris* and *luchis*.<sup>52</sup> were also taken on special occasions. Hindus, in general being vegetarians, confined themselves to pulses, curd, butter, oil, milk<sup>53</sup> and its several preparations as *khir*<sup>54</sup> and *khowa*.<sup>55</sup> Ghee and cheese were also freely used by them.<sup>56</sup> Curd or *dahi* was usually taken at noon.<sup>57</sup> The favourite dish of the Muhammadans was meat in its several preparations. They freely took beef, fish, flesh of goats, sheep and other beasts and birds of prey.<sup>58</sup> With this were mixed *achars*,<sup>59</sup> spices, cloves, cinnamon,<sup>60</sup> pepper and many other condiments to increase the flavour and whet the appetite.<sup>61</sup> They had a special taste for *achars* of mangoes and cloves.<sup>62</sup> The *chappatis* of the rich made of fine white flour kneaded with 15% ghee<sup>63</sup> were called *roghuni*.<sup>64</sup> When mixed with sugar it tasted like palm-cake, according to Manrique.<sup>65</sup> Unlike the Hindus,<sup>61</sup> Muhammadans rarely ate *puris* or *luchis*. On special occasions white loaves kneaded with milk and butter and seasoned with fennel and poppy seeds were prepared.<sup>67</sup> Sometimes their bread was made of *khushka*.<sup>68</sup>

The vegetarian dishes generally meant for Hindus were of a special quality containing a large quantity of butter, several

species of pulses, herbs, vegetables and rice, particularly *birinj*. On his abstinence days, Jahangir would take *lazizah*, a *khichadi* prepared in the Gujarati style.<sup>70</sup> Mukundram's gorgeous description of feasts and of vegetable dishes leaves us in little doubt as to their popularity among the upper classes.<sup>71</sup> The poets Terakanambi Birnmarasa (1485 A.D.) and Mangaraja (1508 A.D.) in their works *Kavicharita* II and *Supasast* respectively give an elaborate description of the contemporary South Indian dishes. The curious reader will find a detailed list of various vegetable,<sup>72</sup> meat and sweet dishes in the *Ain-i-Akbari*, Volume I (1873), p. 59. Similarly, Muhammadans prepared rich and aromatic *birinj*es<sup>73</sup> as *qabuli*, *dudh biryan*, *qimah-pulao* and pudding of rice mixed with almonds and raisins and strewn with butter and pepper. Sweet dishes consisted of *halwa*, sweetmeats and comfits prepared from refined sugar and *faluda*.<sup>74</sup> Various conserves of *maskan*, water-melons, grapes, lemons, oranges,<sup>75</sup> etc., and also *rishta-khatai*<sup>76</sup> perfumed with rose-water, musk and grey ambergris were also kept ready. The flesh of domesticated and wild animals and birds, roasted, fried and made into soup, was their daily food. Partridges, ducks and hares, when available too, formed part of their dishes.<sup>77</sup> An idea of the variety of dishes served at a highly placed Muhammadan's dinner can be had from the description of Asaf Khan's banquet to Sir Thomas Roe<sup>78</sup> and that of a governor of Ahmedabad to Mandelslo.<sup>79</sup>

### Kitchen utensils and crockery

Indians baked their loaves, called *chappatis*, on iron plates,<sup>80</sup> a frying pan<sup>81</sup> or on an oven over a fire of cow-dung instead of fuel.<sup>82</sup> The utensils used in Hindu kitchens, as plates, cups, water-jugs, candlesticks, etc., were all made of brass or bronze,<sup>83</sup> as these had to be scrubbed clean every time they were used. Linschoten saw people at Goa drink out of a copper kan; but they used earthenware<sup>84</sup> for cooking purposes. De Laet also speaks of earthenware being used probably by Muslims in kitchens in the 17th century. The utensils used in Muslim kitchens were either earthenware<sup>85</sup> or made from copper. The Mughal kings generally used gold or silver utensils<sup>86</sup> and were fond of precious China and glassware. Aurangzeb contented himself with earthen or copper vessels.

The copper utensils used in the royal kitchens were treated with tin every fortnight, whereas those for the princes were only done once a month.<sup>87</sup>

### Environment of the Hindu kitchen

Cleanliness was most important, as it is even now, in the preparation and service of food in Hindu kitchens.<sup>88</sup> Hindus took care to confine themselves to home-made dishes and abstained as far as possible from using any edible cooked in the market.<sup>89</sup> A special place, called *chauka*, invariably rubbed over with cow-dung, was reserved for cooking meals and none was allowed to enter with shoes on.<sup>90</sup> Cooking was never entrusted to anybody except a high-caste Brahman or to a member of their own caste.<sup>91</sup> They would prefer to go without meals to accepting a dish defiled by the touch of a low-caste<sup>92</sup> person or that of a non-Hindu. Such food was thrown away. Hindus usually took two meals a day.<sup>93</sup>

Bathing was a prerequisite before meals.<sup>94</sup> The travellers did not fail to note that after their morning wash the Hindus would sit on a piece of mat or fine cloth (in the case of the rich) spread over the ground rubbed over with cow-dung<sup>95</sup> and mutter their prayer. Hindus would at the outset set apart a small portion of their food as a humble homage to the gods.<sup>96</sup> Akbar also used to put apart the share of *dervishes* before he commenced his meal.<sup>97</sup>

In the case of ordinary people, *pattals*, i.e. the leaves of trees stitched together with rushes, were placed before them to serve as plates.<sup>98</sup> The diner rubbed the *pattal* with a little salt and butter, over which were poured rice, boiled without salt, with some vegetables and curd.<sup>99</sup> As soon as diners had finished their meals, the leaves were removed and the ground rubbed afresh.<sup>100</sup> In the case of rajas and other rich men the food was brought from the kitchen in bowls or vessels of silver or gold.<sup>101</sup> To begin with, they took out rice (cooked without salt or other condiments) according to choice and placed it in a large dish "adding some stew to it." Next they partook of vegetables and other dishes according to taste and, mixing a part of them with rice, ate them in small morsels.<sup>102</sup> Akbar used to commence his meals with milk or curd. Table manners required not to use the left hand or to lick the fingers.<sup>103</sup> Wives did not

make it a custom to join their husbands at table. They took meals separately.<sup>104</sup>

While drinking water, the Hindus would not allow the cup to touch their lips,<sup>105</sup> but would pour water from it straight into the throat from a distance. The tumblers were made of copper,<sup>106</sup> gold or silver according to the owner's position. After dinner they would clean their mouths, hands and feet.<sup>107</sup>

### Table manners of the Muhammadans

The Muhammadans did not attach importance to these formalities. Their kitchens and table manners were quite simple, though not always as clean as those of the Hindus. They were free to cook and eat wherever and whatever they liked, except the flesh of a swine. A *dastarkhwan* was spread on the floor and dishes arranged thereon.<sup>108</sup> The whole family sat around and partook of the dishes jointly. The butler placed before each guest a round dish and a portion of food<sup>109</sup> and covered it with fig or other leaves.<sup>110</sup> No napkins were used and even the procedure of washing was not always adhered to.<sup>111</sup> The more well-to-do among them used a superior embroidered silken *dastarkhwan* with artificial flowers of gold and silver. They sometimes made use of spoons,<sup>112</sup> though this was not the usual custom.<sup>113</sup>

The manner of cooking in the royal kitchen, the process of sending in of plates, the measures adopted to check poisoning and their complete success speak well for those who devised them. The curious reader can read the details about these measures in the pages of Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari*.<sup>114</sup>

## INTOXICANTS

### Prohibition of wine

Wine, called *araq* by Babar,<sup>115</sup> was a drink forbidden to Muslims by their religion. Custom forbade it for the generality of Hindus also. So it was not surprising that the masses were opposed to intemperance which was looked upon as a vice and even a sin. Terry rightly observes about the temperance of the common people, Hindus and Muslims, that they would "rather die than eat or drink anything their law forbids."<sup>116</sup> They looked upon drinking as a second madness and, therefore, there is the

same word in their language for a drunkard and a madman.<sup>117</sup> Wine was considered unwholesome and ruinous for health.<sup>118</sup>

The strict prohibition enforced by almost all Mughal kings was no less a factor in discouraging the use of wine among the people. Severe punishment was inflicted for excessive drinking and disorderly conduct.<sup>119</sup> Akbar, more catholic in his approach, relaxed his rules in the case of Europeans because, as he said, "they are born in the element of wine, as fish are produced in that of water...and to prohibit them the use of it is to deprive them of life." Though himself addicted to drinking, Jahangir discouraged its use among his subjects. He himself abstained from wine on Thursday nights and Friday evenings. He found it bad for the temperament, and strictly forbade all kinds of intoxicants which "must neither be made nor sold."<sup>120</sup> Of course, Aurangzeb, who "drank nothing but water," could not tolerate wine.<sup>121</sup> In 1668 he issued orders strictly prohibiting the use of all intoxicating liquors.<sup>122</sup> European travellers confirm the strictness of the measures adopted to enforce prohibition.<sup>123</sup> During his three months' sojourn in Masulipatam, Norris did not hear of a single case of drunkenness.<sup>124</sup> While acknowledging the occasional excesses of certain individuals here and there, we may accept the verdict of Terry as to the general sobriety of all ranks of the population except the nobles attached to the court who formed a class by themselves. In spite of the strict orders of the Mughal kings, nobles indulged in drinking and many of them fell victims to alcohol.<sup>125</sup> This over indulgence and disregard of the prohibitory orders were primarily due to the weak policy followed by the Emperors who, in order to keep company, would invite many of their grantees to attend the royal drinking-parties which were held quite frequently, and thus encouraged its use.<sup>126</sup> Akbar is said to have lost control on himself in one of these parties and was "saved in the nick of time by Raja Man Singh when, under the influence of liquor, the Emperor tried to demonstrate his bravery in Rajput fashion." Even Aurangzeb, who was very abstemious, failed to "keep the Mughal aristocracy back from drink." Sir Jadunath Sarkar notices in the news-letters of the court "many reports of wine-selling, wine-drinking in the camp bazars and houses of his nobles and among the garrisons of the forts."<sup>127</sup>

**Mughals' addiction to drink**

All the Mughal kings, excepting only Aurangzeb, took wine several times a day.<sup>128</sup> Babar and Jahangir<sup>129</sup> were reputed drunkards. The former used to say :

نرووز و نوبهار و سے و دلبری خوشت  
130 بابر بعیش کوش کہ عالم دوبارہ نیست

Jahangir's appetite had grown so much during the latter years of his life that he would take 20 cups of doubly distilled liquor, 14 of which he drank during the day, and the rest at night.<sup>131</sup> Humayun was more fond of opium and seldom took wine.<sup>132</sup> Akbar and Shahjahan would not pass the limits of decency. The former usually "sober in his cups" would only rarely drink to excess. Shahjahan like Babar gave up wine during the arduous Deccan campaigns ; the entire stock of wine was thrown into the Chambal, and the precious cups of gold and silver were broken and distributed among the poor and the needy."<sup>133</sup> Aurangzeb totally abstained from it. Tavernier's assertion that he saw Aurangzeb drunk on three occasions is wholly fabulous.<sup>134</sup> We cannot believe him in the face of the authentic contemporary records.

**Wines**

The most common and perhaps the cheapest drink was the *tari* or juice of cocoanut, palm or date trees.<sup>135</sup> Pleasant in taste and flavour, it was drunk with pleasure throughout India.<sup>136</sup> Cocoa juice was the principal ingredient for the preparation of a liquor which "drinks as deliciously as wine."<sup>137</sup> Indians, particularly the Goanese,<sup>138</sup> liked it much and drank it like water.<sup>139</sup> It was very strong, especially after the third distillation.<sup>140</sup> *Nira* was another kind of wine drawn from *arequier* tree and was sweet like milk.<sup>141</sup> *Mahwa* was another tree whose fruit<sup>142</sup> yielded an intoxicant liquor.<sup>143</sup> Kherra<sup>144</sup> and Bhadwar<sup>145</sup> were famous for this particular wine, which was considered unwholesome unless boiled.<sup>146</sup> Wine was prepared from refined sugar by a chemical process.<sup>147</sup> According to Ovington, a wine called *jagre* was extracted from black sugar.<sup>148</sup> Wines were also manufactured from rice<sup>149</sup> and *toddy*.<sup>150</sup> In Bengal, wine was prepared from the aquatic plant called

*kajang* and from the *tung seeds*.<sup>150\*</sup> Some superior kinds of wines were imported from foreign countries like Portugal<sup>151</sup> and Persia.<sup>152</sup> Persian wine manufactured from grapes was smuggled into the Mughal dominions in spite of strict prohibition.

### Opium

Opium<sup>153</sup> called *afion* was in use among a large number of people, especially Muhammadans<sup>154</sup> and Rajputs.<sup>155</sup> According to Mandelslo, "They take every day a small pill of it about the bigness of a pea."<sup>156</sup> It stimulated the old, the weary and the fatigued and maintained the spirits of workers so that they would not feel the rigour of the work.<sup>157</sup> The messengers and *harkaras* who had to traverse long distances took it in order to "hearten themselves."<sup>158</sup> Rajputs were specially addicted to it and took large quantities of a drug, called *madhava-ra-peala*. Opium-eating came to be regarded as a sign of aristocracy. Its excessive use by Rai Ganga (1515-1531) of Jodhpur led to his death.<sup>159</sup> Rajput kings were mostly devotees of Hara or Lord Shiva. As Tod says, "Hara is the patron of all who love war and drink and is especially the object of Rajput warriors' devotion."<sup>160</sup> The Rajputs would even double the dose on the eve of a battle.<sup>161</sup> Bernier writes: "It is an interesting sight to see them (Rajputs) on the eve of a battle with the fumes of opium in their heads." Its stimulating effect animated them with extraordinary courage and bravery to fight more valiantly and heroically.<sup>162</sup> Opium was also used as a sedative for old men and children.<sup>163</sup> Some of the Mughal emperors also, particularly Humayun and Jahangir,<sup>164</sup> were very fond of this intoxicant. The former used to say: "I am an opium eater; if there is any delay in my comings and goings, do not be angry with me."<sup>165</sup> The latter being a habitual opium eater would repeat the dose at least twice a day.<sup>166</sup> The only reference to opium in the *Babarnama* is in connection with Qasim-i-Ali who is described as the "opium eater."<sup>167</sup> According to Father Ridolfo, "Akbar used to take *post*, a preparation of opium, diluted and modified by various admixtures of spices."<sup>168</sup> Monserrate also confirms it.<sup>169</sup>

### Other drugs

*Bhang* was another intoxicant commonly used by the



poor,<sup>170</sup> who sometimes mixed it with nutmegs and mace,<sup>171</sup> whereas the rich added cloves, camphor, ambar, musk and opium to it.<sup>172</sup> It kept one in a pleasant mood. Sometimes green areca was put into it to increase its effect. It was taken to increase appetite. Under its intoxicating effect one could undertake hard labour without feeling exhaustion. But an excessive dose of it would make one unconscious. Raja Bhagwan Das of Amber begged mercy from the Emperor Akbar for his brother Rupsi who had defied the Imperial authority under the influence of *bhang*.<sup>173</sup> Jahangir prohibited the use of *bhang* and *buza* altogether, declaring that they were injurious to health.<sup>174</sup>

### Tobacco

Tobacco<sup>174\*</sup> gained rapid popularity among common people soon after its introduction into India in 1605 by the Portuguese.<sup>175</sup> In spite of the advice of his physicians, Akbar enjoyed it sometimes. Asad Beg gives us a beautiful description of the pipe and the presentation ceremony.<sup>176</sup> Smoking became so habitual with one and all in the short interval of a decade or so that Jahangir had to order its prohibition by a special enactment in 1617 on account of the disturbance that "it brings about in most temperaments and constitutions."<sup>177</sup> But the decree remained a dead letter and was more honoured in its breach than observance.<sup>178</sup> Thevenot refers to its frequent use by the nobles.<sup>179</sup> Its wide popularity among the lower strata of society may be estimated from Manrique's account. While a prisoner at Multan, he had to accede to the request of his guards for some money to enable them to satisfy their craving for tobacco.<sup>180</sup>

Muhammadans were specially accustomed to it and consumed a major quantity of the intoxicant by frequent smoking.<sup>181</sup> It was their chief and customary entertainment after meals.<sup>182</sup> A long brass pipe adapted to a large crystal hubble-bubble fixed in a brass frame was used for smoking.<sup>183</sup> It was usual to see people sitting cross-legged at their doors with *hukka* pipes in their mouths. Sometimes women, too, indulged in smoking.<sup>184</sup> The consumption of the drug increased so much that Manucci mentions Rs. 5,000 as tabacco duty for a day in Delhi alone. The abolition of the Act, according to him, came

as a great relief for the poor class.<sup>185</sup>

### Betels

Betel leaf called *pan* was in most common use throughout India among all classes of people.<sup>186</sup> The *pan* consisted of the betel leaf, an areca-nut or *supari*<sup>187</sup> cut into small pieces, lime-water and *kattha*.<sup>188</sup> The rich added camphor and musk to it and tied both its leaves with a silk thread. There were several species of betel of which the choicest were *Bilhari*, *Kakar*, *Jaiswas*, *Kapuri*, *Kapur Kant*, and *Bangalah*.<sup>189</sup> *Makhi*<sup>190</sup> leaves of Bihar and *Keroah*<sup>191</sup> of Orissa were much sought after by betel lovers. The former held the reputation of being delicate in fragrance, strong in taste and good in colour.<sup>192</sup> Betel was necessarily chewed after meals, but most of the people went on taking it throughout the day.<sup>193</sup>

### Tea and coffee

Tea and coffee were taken by quite a good number of people, especially those of the Coromandel coast.<sup>194</sup> Brahmans and Banias were particularly fond of it. Thevenot asserts that Banias and Brahmans drank nothing but water, "wherein they put coffee and tea."<sup>195</sup> Ovington makes us believe that tea was taken by Banias without sugar or mixed with a small quantity of conserved lemons.<sup>196</sup> He further writes: "Tea, with some hot spices intermixed and boiled in the water, has the repute of prevailing against the headache, gravel and griping in the guts." According to Della Valle, many people in India used a liquor called coffee which was made "from a black seed boiled in water which turned it almost into the same colour." Tea and coffee were not taken as beverages but as intoxicants.<sup>197</sup> Certain special vessels made of tin covered with cases and cloth wrappings were used to keep the tea hot.<sup>198</sup> The rich and the nobles took delight in partaking of coffee with their friends. Hamilton was invited by the Nawab of Tattah to "take a dish of coffee" with him.<sup>199</sup> There seem to have been coffee shops, if not coffee houses, in some of our principal cities like Delhi and Ahmedabad.<sup>200</sup>

## NOTES

1. Ovington's remarks (p. 303) that "neither delicacy of taste nor dread of sickness or even death could possibly tempt a Hindu" to take meat, are based on misconception and may be true in the case of the orthodox ones.
2. Varthema, p. 45.
3. Camoes in Canto VII, Est. XL writes about Brahmans :  
 "To crown their meal no meaner life expires ;  
 Pulses, fruit and herbs alone their board requires."  
 (*India in Portuguese Literature*, p. 54)  
 Badaoni (II, p. 103 ; Tr., II, p. 313) rightly observed that most of them would not take even garlic and onions because their view of life was to eat to live and not to live to eat. (Della Valle, p. 406). Britto in his letter of 1683 A.D. praised the nobility of Tamilham for abstaining from meat and fish. "It is however something to be able to raise oneself above this gross sensuality which puts us near the heart." R. Sathianathailer, *Tamilham in the 17th Century*, p. 176.
4. Pelsaert's *India*, p. 76 ; Mandelslo, p. 58 ; Orme's *Fragments*, p. 469. Some of the Rajputs took swine's flesh (Della Valle, p. 435). According to Mukundram, a poet of the 16th century, some of the Kshatriyas adopted the sale of game as a regular profession and had little difficulty in finding customers. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 181. The king and nobles of Vijayanagar took all kind of flesh excepting beef. Barbosa, I, p. 203 ; Saletore, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 311.
5. Akbar abstained from meat on Fridays, and subsequently on Sundays, first day of every solar month, whole month of Farwardin and the month of Aban in which he was born. The killing of animals was stopped on Sundays by Akbar's orders. *Ain*, I, pp. 61-62. Jahangir later on added Thursday, the day of the birth of his father. *Tuzuk*, Lowe, p. 184.
6. *A.N.*, I, p. 351 ; Tr., I, p. 634. When a beef broth and curry was brought before Humayun, his words were : "Oh unfortunate Kamran, was this the mode of your existence ? Did you feed the asylum of chastity on the

flesh of cows ? What ! Could you not afford to keep a few goats for her subsistence ?" *Tazkirat-ul-Waqyat*, Stewart, p. 83.

7. *Tazkirat-ul-Waqyat*, Trans. Stewart, pp. 83-84.
8. *Ain*, I, p. 64.
9. Badaoni, II, p. 103 ; Tr., II, p. 313. This is an exaggeration. Akbar did not give up meat altogether. The *Ain*, I, (Persian), p. 59, mentions the days on which he abstained and the total number of these *sufiyanah* days comes to about nine months in a year. Thus for three months, he took meat. Also see *Tuzuk*, I, p. 45 ; Badaoni, II, p. 531.
10. Jahangir gave up fish-eating altogether. *Tuzuk*, Lowe, p. 188.
11. Jahangir had also stopped the killing of animals from the 8th of Rabi I every year for the number of days corresponding with his age. R. & B., I, pp. 185, 310. His orders were so strictly observed that once the Id-ul-Zuha fell on a Thursday and the customary animal sacrifice could not be performed by Muslims. R. & B., I, pp. 185, 189.
12. Manrique, II, pp. 186-87 ; Bernier, p. 250.
13. Manrique, II, p. 187.
14. *Ibid*, II, pp. 156-57.
15. Roe's *Embassy*, p. 92.
16. *Ain*, (I, p. 57) says a hundred dishes can be prepared in an hour. On page XXVIII of the Preface of the *Ain*, it is written that in Abul Fazl's camp in the Deccan, one thousand dishes were served daily, but it seems to be an exaggeration. According to *Maasir-ul-Umra*, (Vol. I, Trans., p. 385) 200 sheep were daily used for Baqir K. Najmsani's table. On marches 40 strings of camels carried his kitchen, and 13 silver cauldrons (*degs*) were in cooking when on march to Transoxiana.
17. *Ain* I, Preface, p. XXVIII. The seer of that time was one half of its modern successor.
18. Abul Fazl (*Ain*, I, p. 57) lays great stress on proper care being shown for appropriate food. Also see *Ain*, I, (1873), pp. 56-59.
19. *Ain*, I, p. 57. According to Manucci (*Storia*, II, p. 332), one thousand rupees were spent every day as expenses of

- the king's kitchen in Aurangzeb's reign. *Storia*, II, p. 332.
20. Rankings' *Historical Researches*, p. 266.
  21. Moreland's *India at the Death of Akbar*, p. 272.
  22. Tavernier, p. 133. Also see *Kavicharita*, II, pp. 336-37 for corroboration by Annaji, a poet of early 17th century ; Saletore, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 316.
  23. Della Valle, p. 135. According to Grose, "Hindus were very fond of sweetmeats and many of their varieties were unknown." Grose's, *Voyages*, Vol. I, p. 233.
  24. Manrique, II, pp. 156-57.
  25. Bernier, p. 250.
  26. *Ibid*, p. 249.
  27. Manrique, II, p. 127 ; Pyrard, I, p. 328 ; Roe's *Embassy*, pp. 241-42 ; Della Valle, p. 408.
  28. R. & B., I, pp. 100-101.
  29. *Waqyat-i-Jahangiri*, E. & D., VI, p. 349 ; *Ain*, I, p. 65 ; also see *Storia*, VI, p. 151.
  30. Bernier, pp. 203-4.
  31. *Ain*, I, pp. 65-66.
  32. *Ain*, I, pp. 65-66.
  33. *First Englishmen in India*, p. 100 ; Ovington, p. 310 ; Pyrard, I, p. 259 ; Bernier, p. 356 ; *Ain*, I, p. 58.
  34. *Ain*, I, p. 55. Tavernier (I, p. 95) writes : "The principal reason why the Ganges water is so much esteemed is that it never becomes bad and engenders no vermin." Even Aurangzeb drank it. (Bernier, pp. 221, 364). Orme's *Fragments*, p. 469. For the use of Ganges water by Muslim rulers see *Annals of Sri Venkateswara Oriental Institute*, Vol. I, Pt. III, pp. 1-15.
  35. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 56. A seer of ice cost 5 dams and only 15½ *jittals* if brought by carriage.
  36. The price of saltpetre varies from 3/4 to 4 maunds per rupee. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 56.
  37. *A.N.*, I, p. 207 ; Tr., I, p. 421.
  38. Bernier, p. 249.
  39. Mandelslo, p. 64 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 263 ; Della Valle, p. 409 ; Tavernier, p. 124 ; Thevenot Chap. XXIX ; Hamilton, I, p. 162 ; Ovington, pp. 310-11. *Khichari* seems to have been more common in eastern and southern India.

40. Hamilton (I, p. 152) found in it a 'pleasing nourishment.' De Laet's (p. 89) contention that this dish was taken in the evening is doubtful. A special type of preparation called Gujarati *khichari* was reserved for special occasions. *J.U.P. Hist. Sec.*, XV, Pt. I, p. 67.
41. *Tuzuk*, Lowe, p. 76.
42. *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, (Urdu Trans.), p. 105.
43. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 384 ; Mango-pickle was very much liked. Linschoten, p. 209. Sometimes the inhabitants of Kashmir and Orissa would steep the cooked rice in cold water to eat it the next day. *Ain*, II, pp. 128, 349.
- 43\*. Subah-ul-Din : *Hindustan Ke Musalmano Ke Tamadni Jalwe*, Azamgarh, 1963, p. 367.
44. Mandelslo, p. 64 ; Della Valle, p. 409 ; Tavernier, II, p. 70.
45. *Ain*, II, p. 240 ; Della Valle, p. 409 ; Stavorinus, II, p. 386.
46. Tavernier, p. 124.
47. Moreland's *India at the Death of Akbar*, p. 271.
48. Tavernier states that *khichari* was their evening meal, p. 124 ; Pelsaert's *India*, p. 61.
49. Ovington, p. 313 ; Tavernier, I, p. 324 ; also see De Laet, p. 86.
50. Reference may be made in this connection to an interesting work *Bhojana-Kutuhala* by Raghunatha compiled in about 1700 A.D. The MS. exists in Baroda Oriental Research Institute. Also see *Annals* (B.O.R. Institute), Vol. XXI, pp. 254-63. For dishes in Rajasthan as *sev*, *suhali*, *laddu*, *manda*, fried *pappads*, *khaja*, *salan*, *padi*, *lapsika* of the *panchadhari* variety, *kansar*, *dhan* and others refer to Kanhadadeprabandhu, *J.I.H.*, April, 1960, p. 106.
51. For vegetables see *Ain*, I, pp. 58-60. For incredibly low price of the menu at the dinners given to Chaitanya at Puri in about 1520 A.D. refer to his biography by Krishna Das Kaviraj. *The History of Bengal*, Vol. II, University of Dacca, p. 218.
52. *Padmavat*, (Hindi), pp. 90-92.
53. For reference to milk, their favourite food, see Ovington,

- p. 303 ; Monserrate's *commentary*, p. 8 ; Mandelslo, p. 68.
54. According to Ovington (pp. 310-12) it is a delicious dish prepared by boiling rice to which is added proportionate sugar, dry nuts and almonds.
  55. Mandelslo, p. 13. Another well-known preparation of milk.
  56. Della Valle, p. 435.
  57. Bernier, (1891), p. 354.
  58. Mandelslo, p. 68 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 380 ; Bernier, p. 250 ; *Storia*, III, p. 43.
  59. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 384.
  60. Ovington, p. 335.
  61. Linschoten, II, p. 75 ; Manrique, II, p. 109.
  62. Linschoten, II, pp. 75-77.
  63. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 61.
  64. *Roghuni* is a bread with a great deal of ghee. Manrique, II, p. 188.
  65. Manrique II, p. 188.
  66. *Padmavat*, (Hindi), pp. 90-92.
  67. *A.N.*, I, p. 207 ; Tr., I, p. 421.
  68. *Ain*, I, p. 61. *Khushka* was also the name of a dish which had rice, salt, etc. as its ingredients. (*Ain*, I, p. 62).
  69. *Birinj* means rice cooked with certain vegetables, etc.
  70. R. & B., I, p. 419. Aurangzeb liked *khichari-i-biryani* for which a special cook was employed in the royal kitchen. *Ruqqat-i-Alamgiri*, (ed. Muhammad Abdur Rahman), p. 4 ; Bernier, (1916), p. 381. Also see Capt. Cope, *A New History of the East Indies*, London, MDCCLIV.
  71. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 181.
  72. *Zard birinj*, *shir birinj*. *khichari* and *bandinjan* were the special preparations of rice. For their details see *Ain*, I, p. 59. Also see *Padmavat*, ed. by Ram Chandra Shukla, (Hindi), Pt. II, pp. 90-92, for various dishes prepared on the marriage of Ratna Sen.
  73. For their composition see *Ain*, I, (1873), pp. 59-60. Also see Hobson Jobson *Pilau*, Roë and Fryer, p. 279.
  74. *A.N.*, I, p. 208 ; Tr., I, p. 423. Herklots App. 5. "A jelly strained from boiled wheat, and eaten with the expressed juice of fruits and ice to which cream is also

- sometimes added." Also see Badaoni, Tr., III, p. 215 ; R. & B., I, p. 387.
75. Pyrard, I, p. 328.
  76. *Waqyat-i-Jahangiri* ; E. & D., VI, p. 343.
  77. Bernier, p. 252.
  78. Purchas, IV, p. 421. Della Valle (pp. 407-8) says he was present at Asaf Khan's banquet to Sir Thomas Roe, which is nothing but falsehood.
  79. Mandelslo, p. 69.
  80. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 61.
  81. Mandelslo, p. 68 ; Della Valle, p. 409.
  82. Orme's *Fragments*, p. 472.
  83. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 181. About the poorer sort Mandelslo writes : "Their dishes, drinking-cups and napkins are made of fig leaves of which they also make pitchers and oil-pots." Mandelslo, p. 85.
  84. Bernier (p. 356) says that the water was stored in earthen jars.
  85. Linschoten, I, p. 188.
  86. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 593.
  87. *Ibid.*
  88. Ovington, p. 312.
  89. Pyrard, p. 377.
  90. Macauliffe, I, p. 239. Also see *Ain*, III, (Sarkar), p. 24 ; and *Storia*, III, p. 87.
  91. Pyrard, I, p. 377.
  92. Ovington, p. 312.
  93. Pyrard, I, p. 377. "To eat twice in the day or night is not approved." *Ain*, III, (Sarkar), p. 325.
  94. Pyrard, I, p. 377 ; *Jahangir's India*, p. 76 ; *Travels of Nikitin in India in the 17th Century*, p. 17 ; Della Valle, p. 440.
  95. *J.R.A.S.*, Bengal letters, Vol. IV, 1938 ; *Description of Indostan and Guzarat* (1611 A.D.) Trans. by Rev. H. Hosten, S.J. ; Pyrard, I, p. 377 ; *Ain*, III, (Sarkar), p. 324 ; *Jahangir's India*, p. 76 ; *Storia*, III, pp. 41-42.
  96. *Ain*, III, (Sarkar), p. 325 ; *Storia* III, p. 3.
  97. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 58.
  98. *Ain*, III, (Sarkar), p. 325 ; Della Valle, II, p. 327 ; Tavernier, I, p. 60 ; Bartolomeo, p. 159.



99. *Storia*, III, p. 42.
100. Pyrard, I, p. 391.
101. *Storia*, III, p. 41.
102. *Storia*, III, p. 42.
103. De Laet, pp. 91-92.
104. *Storia*, III, p. 42.
105. Linschoten, I, pp. 261-62 ; Dela Valle, pp. 81-82.
106. Pyrard, I, p. 378 ; Della Valle refers to it as "drinking in the air" Della Valle, p. 43.
107. *Storia*, III, p. 43. Muhammadans would use pea-flour to remove grease from their hands. *Storia*, II, p. 41.
108. Mandelslo, p. 28. *Tazkirat-ul-Waqyat*, Stewart, pp. 82-83.
109. De Laet, pp. 91-92.
110. *Early Travels in India*, p. 96.
111. No traveller has referred to their washing of hands, etc. before meals. Mandelslo, p. 68.
112. Spoons made of Hindi nuts. The Arabs call it *narjil*, Hindustanis *nalir*. *B.N.*, p. 509. *Tazkirat-ul-Waqyat*, Stewart, pp. 82-83 ; Linschoten, I, p. 207.
113. "They eat with fingers," writes De Laet, pp. 91-92.
114. *Ain*, I, (1873), pp. 58-59. It will be interesting to recall that during Aurangzeb's time when expenses of the royal kitchen had been considerably reduced due to the austere habits of the king, the monthly expenses came to Rs. 1,000 daily. *Storia*, II, p. 332.
115. *B.N.*, pp. 385-86.
116. Terry in *Early Travels*, p. 317.
117. *Ibid* ; *Storia*, IV, p. 208 ; R. Sathianathailer, *Tamilham in the 17th Century*, p. 176.
118. *R. & B.*, I, p. 306.
119. Badaoni, II, pp. 301-2 ; *Tr.* II, p. 311.
120. *Tuzuk*, Lowe, p. 7. For Akbar see Badaoni, II, pp. 301-2 ; *Tr.*, II, p. 311.
121. Tavernier, II p. 124.
122. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* in Elliot and Dowson, VI, p. 283.
123. Petermundy, II, p. 134 ; *Storia*, II, p. 6 ; Bernier, p. 253 ; Ovington, p. 296. The Governor of Masulipatam announced a fine of Rs. 10 on any Hindu who disobeyed this order. Norris, *Embassy to Aurangzib*, p. 149.
124. Norris, *Embassy to Aurangzib*, p. 119.

125. *Early Travels*, p. 783 ; R. & B., I, pp. 35, 134, 141, etc. ; *Ain*, I, pp. 340-91. Shaikh Abdur Rahim of Kakhnar drank so heavily that he frequently got insane. *Ain*, I, pp. 524-43.
126. *B.N.*, p. 406 ; *Ain*, I, p. 207 ; *Storia*, II, p. 6.
127. *History of Aurangzib*, Vol. V, p. 461 ; *Storia*, II, pp. 157, 313. According to Manucci, "the pots and pans in which the beverage was prepared were broken daily by *muhtasibs*." *Storia*, II, pp. 57. *A.N.*, III, p. 43.
128. *B.N.*, pp. 385-86, 414-15.
129. R. & B., II, p. 35.
130. "The new year, the spring, the wine, and the beloved are pleasing ;  
Enjoy them Babar, for the world is not to be had a second time."
131. "At first it was 6 cups every evening, each cup being  $7\frac{1}{2}$  tolas ; altogether 45 tolas. The wine was usually mixed with water. Now I drank 6 cups each of which 6 tolas and 3 mashas ; altogether  $37\frac{1}{2}$  tolas." R. & B., II, p. 35.
132. "Humayum enjoying a wine party." Painting No. 630, I.A.E.
133. Qazvini, pp. 90-91 quoted in Saksena's *Shahjahan*, p. 27.
134. Tavernier, p. 124.
135. *B.N.*, p. 509. Nicholas Downton (1614-15) thought the Indian wines to be not very strong. William Foster, *The Voyage of Nicholas Downton to East Indies*, p. 146.
136. Thevenot, Pt. III, Chap. VIII, p. 17 ; Pedro Teixeira, p. 198 ; Ovington, p. 239.
137. Mandelslo, p. 27.
138. *First Englishmen in India*, p. 77.
139. Linschoten, II, p. 47.
140. *Ibid.*
141. Ovington, p. 239.
142. Called *Gilaundah*. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 70.
143. De Laet, pp. 28-29. Manuel Godino de Eredia (1611) mentions a wine which the Indians made from a certain fruit called *mauh* mixed with the bark of *babuli* tree and tasted very well. *J.R.A.S.B.*, Vol. IV, (1938), p. 541.
144. Petermundy, II, p. 98.
145. De Laet, pp. 28-29.

146. *Ibid.*
147. Bernier, p. 253.
148. Ovington, p. 238.
149. Pedro Teixeira, p. 197.
150. Ovington, p. 238 ; De Laet, pp. 28-29.
- 150\* Karim, A., *Social History of Bengal*, Dacca, 1959, p. 191.
151. *First Englishmen in India*, p. 77.
152. Pedro Teixeira, p. 197. Shiraz wine was much liked (E.F., 1934-36, p. 166). Babar speaks of Bukhara wine as the strongest of all. *B.N.*, pp. 83-85.
153. Opium was planted in Bihar and Malwa from ancient times. Moreland's *India at the Death of Akbar*, p. 158. Date of its introduction in India is unknown. (Tod, I, p. 507).
154. Pyrard, I, p. 200. According to Manual Godino (1611) it was much used in Muhammadan medicines. *J.R.A.S.B.*, IV, p. 551,
155. Tod, I, (1877), p. 508.
156. Mandelslo, p. 67.
157. Linschoten, II, p. 114 ; Grose, I, pp. 122-23.
158. Mandelslo, p. 67.
159. *Marwar Ka Itihas*, Rev. V. I., p. 115.
160. Tod, op. cit., V. I., p. 87.
161. Bernier, p. 40.
162. *Ibid.*
163. *Ain*, II, p. 196. Also see *Ain*, I, p. 417 f.n. 2.
164. R. & B., I. p. 310.
165. *H.N. G.* (Bev.), p. 131. *A.N.*, I, p. 363 ; Tr., I, p. 654.
166. *Tuzuk*, Lowe, p. 310. See painting No. 637 Mughal, 17th century, lent by Rampur State Library, "Bust of Jahangir." He holds an opium bowl in his hands. *Tuzuk*, Lowe, Tr., pp. 44-49 ; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri* (Urdu), p. 204.
167. *B.N.*, p. 385. There is a manuscript, *Risala-i-Afion* in Hamdard Dawakhana Library, Delhi, which was compiled by one Umad-ud-Din during Akbar's time.
168. Smith, *Akbar the Great Mogul*, p. 336.
169. Monserrate, p. 199.
170. Linschoten, II, pp. 115-16.

172. *Ibid.* Babar was fond of this intoxicant. Macauliffe, I, p. 120.
173. R. & B., I, p. 157 ; Petermundy, II, p. 247.
174. A.N., III, (Bev.), p. 70.
- 174\* According to Moreland, tobacco plant was first established in the province of Gujarat where the leaf was obtainable in 1613.
175. Manrique, II, p. 250 ; Moreland's *India at the Death of Akbar*, p. 158.
176. "Stem three cubits in length was the finest to be procured at Achin beautifully dried and coloured both ends being adorned with jewels and enamel, the oval-shaped mouth-piece of Yaman cornelian betel leaf of very superior workmanship and a golden burner all elegantly arranged in a silver tray and presented to the emperor." See Painting No. 525, I.A.E., middle of 18th century, lent by C.A.A. Museum, for a good *hukka* of those days. See E. & D., VI, pp. 165-67.
177. R. & B., I, p. 374.
178. R. & B., I, p. 370 ; A.N., III, p. 103 ; Badaoni, II, p. 357.
179. Thevenot, Chapter VI, p. 103.
180. Manrique, II, p. 250 ; *Storia*, II, p. 175.
181. See Hobson Jobson.
182. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 280 ; *Storia*, I, p. 63. For painting of a "Nawab smoking a *hukka*" see painting No. 681, I.A.E., 18th century.
183. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 189. In the Central Asian Antiquities Museum, New Delhi, there is a *hukka* of Mughal days probably used by the emperors.
184. Painting No. 524, middle of the 18th century, I.A.E., lent by C.A.A. Museum.
185. *Storia*, II, p. 175.
186. Mandelslo, p. 33.
187. Linschoten says that Malabar and Portuguese called it "arecea", the Gujaratis and Deccanis *supari*, and the Arabians *tauffel* ; Linschoten, II, p. 64.
188. Betel leaves are mixed with a sort of "lime made by oyster and areca." A collection of voyages undertaken by Dutch East India Company, p. 1 ; Linschoten, II, p. 64.

- For a special type of *pan* called *birah* see *Ain*, I, (1873), pp. 72-73.
189. *Ibid.*
  190. *Ain*, I, p. 157.
  191. *Ibid.*, p. 126.
  192. Petermundy, II, p. 96.
  193. *Storia*, I, p. 63. For a painting see "Lady holding plate of betel nuts." Painting No. 670, I A.E., Deccani, 1700 A.D. ; Pyrard, I, p. 200. Also see Tod, I, (Crookes), pp. 346, 481, 552, 570 ; II, pp. 969, 1040 ; Linschoten, II, p. 64. For a *pandan* of 17th century refer to Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *The Arts and Crafts of India and Ceylon*, p. 229. *Pan* was offered to a courtier by the king as a mark of royal favour. Petermundy, II, pp. 96-97 ; *Storia*, I, pp. 62-63 ; Roe's *Embassy*, p. 453 ; *M.A.* (Persian), p. 262.
  194. Pyrard, I, p. 202.
  195. Thevenot, III, Chap. XLVII, p. 81.
  196. Ovington, p. 306.
  197. Della Valle, p. 365.
  198. Pyrard, I, p. 202.
  199. Hamilton, I, (New Edition), p. 119.
  200. Storey, II, Fasc. III, p. 460. Also see *Mughal Literature* by M.A. Ghani, Pt. III, p. 196.

### CHAPTER 3

## Games, Sports and Other Amusements

Leaving aside twentieth-century amusements like cinema-going, flying, etc. that have come to us through contact with the West, the pastimes in vogue during Mughal times were similar to those commonly found today. The difference, if any, lies in details only. Chess, *chaupar* and playing cards were the chief among indoor games and were accessible to the rich and the poor alike. The various types of tiger-play, the games of *gutis* and the games of sheep and goats were favourites with the rural population. Of the outdoor diversions, hunting, animal-fights and *chaugan* were the privilege of the few, while *ishq-bazi*, wrestling, etc. were enjoyed by one and all. Strangely enough, no reference to *kabaddi* is traceable in early records. But the game must have been played in villages, as it is even today. Jugglers and magicians formed a class by themselves. Boys amused themselves, as narrated by Mukundram in his poem *Chandi*, with the flying of kites,<sup>1</sup> mock fights, blind man's buff, climbing of trees, *bag chal* and such other common pastimes.<sup>2</sup> Manucci sums up the amusements of the princesses and other high-class ladies thus :

"They have the permission to enjoy the pleasure of the comedy and the dance, to listen to tales and stories of love, to recline upon beds of flowers, to walk about in gardens, to listen to the murmuring of the running waters, to hear singing or other similar pastimes."<sup>3</sup>

### Playing cards

This is an old game and was in vogue in India long before the advent of the Mughals. M. Ashraf's view that "it appears

to have been first introduced into Hindustan by the Mughal emperor Babar"<sup>4</sup> is not conclusive. The external as well as internal evidence is against it. The names of all the 12 suits were in the Sanskrit dialect instead of Persian till the time of Akbar,<sup>5</sup> who introduced a change by renaming the last seven suits and reconstituting *dhanpati*, the fifth, out of a total of 12.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, Abul Fazl's remark that "the ancient sages took the number 12 as basis and made the suit to consist of 12 cards" shows that the game was practised in pre-Mughal days.<sup>7</sup> From the few stray references available about this game in contemporary Mughal records, it appears that the game was favoured by the rich and the poor alike.<sup>8</sup>

The pack consisted of 12 suits of 12 cards each making a total of 144 with different kinds of kings and followers.<sup>9</sup> Ashraf's contention that the "old Mughal pack of cards was made up of eight suits of 12 cards each" (instead of 12 suits) is not borne out by documentary evidence. As is clearly mentioned in the *Ain-i-Akbari*, the ancient game of 12 suits, each of which had 12 cards, was not altered. What Akbar did was to make "some suitable alterations in the cards,"<sup>10</sup> and to reconstitute the last eight of the suits of the original pack. The first four, namely *ashwapati* (lord of horses), *gajpati* (king of elephants), *narpati* (king of infantry) and *gadhpati*, (king on throne over a fort), remained intact.<sup>11</sup> Ashraf, under some misconception about this, appears to have omitted to count the first four and miscalculated the number as reduced from 12 to eight. This view is further confirmed by the fact that none of the new names have been given the assignments of the first four.

As distinguished from our present-day cards, they were all in pictures, the highest represented the king, the second highest a *vazir* and the rest were followers from one to ten. In the topmost suit of *ashwapati*, for example, the king was shown on horseback with the umbrella (*chhatra*), the standard and other imperial ensigns. The second highest card of the same suit represented a *vazir* on horseback and the rest were with pictures of horses from one to ten.<sup>12</sup> The superiority of suits seems to have been observed in the order given in the *Ain-i-Akbari* by Abul Fazl—the first six of these suits were called *bishbar* (powerful) and the six last were *kambar* or

weak.<sup>13</sup>

The game continued to be a favourite with the successive emperors, Aurangzeb being the only exception. Humayun played this game with his stepmother and sisters at Kabul.<sup>14</sup> During one of his visits,<sup>15</sup> Thomas Roe found Jahangir immersed in it. The game was equally popular with the common people,<sup>16</sup> who displayed several tricks at cards.

### Chess

Chess has all along been one of the most common diversions of the Indian people. Alberuni, who visited India during Sultan Mahmud's time, refers to this game. He writes : "They (Indians) play chess four persons at a time with a pair of dice."<sup>17</sup> Hasan Nizami, author of *Taj-ul-Maasir*, Amir Khusrau and Malik Muhammad Jayasi, author of *Padmavat*, frequently refer to this game. During the Mughal period the king, nobles and commoners all took great delight in playing this game.<sup>18</sup> Akbar is said to have played the game of living chess with slave girls as pieces moving on the chequered pavement of the *Pachisi* Court at Fatehpur Sikri.<sup>19</sup> The Mughal aristocrats were specially interested in it, and Manucci, who was a frequent visitor to their palaces, writes that by playing chess "they learn to govern, place and displace, give and take with discretion to the glory and gain of their projects."<sup>20</sup>

The chess-table preserved in the Archaeological Museum in Delhi Fort shows that the chessboard was divided into 64 squares, eight on each of the four sides.<sup>21</sup> Each player had at his command a little army of 16 men, from the king down to a foot-soldier. The game could be played both<sup>22</sup> two-handed and four-handed. Akbar was an expert in both. Sometimes international matches were held and bets offered. Jahangir's courtier, Khan-i-Khanan, was deputed to combat Shah Shafi of Persia. The game lasted for three days, but the poor ambassador lost it and had to carry out the bet that the "loser should bray like an ass."<sup>23</sup>

### Chaupar

The antiquity of *chaupar* is undisputed. It continued to be in vogue in India throughout the Mughal period.<sup>24</sup> In the 17th century, *chaupar* became the favourite game of the court.



Zeb-un-Nisa, the eldest daughter of Aurangzab, spent most of her spare time in playing *chaupar* with her girl friends.<sup>25</sup> Sometimes as many as 200 Mughal nobles used to take part in the play.<sup>26</sup> A match, it appears, used to be of 16 games. The game, at times, lasted for three months.

Betting was usual. Any player might depute a substitute, who was entitled to 2% of all winnings and had to share 1% if he lost a bet.<sup>27</sup> It appears, however, that the Mughals were not familiar<sup>28</sup> with the game as it existed in India till the time of Akbar, who framed special rules and regulations and made it popular.<sup>29</sup>

The description of the game in the *Ain-i-Akbari* leaves us in little doubt that no ready-made tables for the game were available in those days.<sup>30</sup> The people themselves used to draw on the floor or on some paper two parallel lines of equal length, with two others bisecting them at right angles, forming a little square at the centre and four rectangles, each divided into four equal spaces of three rows on its (four) adjoining sides. The game was usually played by four players, two contending against the other two. But it could also be played by two persons only. Each player had at his command four pieces of the same shape, but different in colour from those of his companions. Three dice were used with dots marked from one to six. To begin with, each player was required to place two of his pieces in the sixth and seventh places of the same middle row, while the seventh and eighth spaces of the right row were occupied by the other two pieces. The left row was left empty. Each moved his pieces according to his throw till he arrived at the row to the left of the place of his start. He would then move to the empty space in the middle when he threw the exact number required to carry each of his pieces to the empty square. He was now *rasida* or arrived. If any of the four players had brought his four pieces into the empty square, even then he continued to throw for his companion in his turn "to get him out too."<sup>31</sup>

### Chandal Mandal

*Chandal mandal* was a modified *chaupar* so designed as to increase the number of players to 16 with 64 pieces divided equally among them. The pieces were moved as in *chaupar*.

The game could be played in 12 different ways.

It consisted of 16 parrallelograms, each divided into 24 equal fields, each having three rows and three spaces. These parallelograms were arranged in a circular form around a centre. Betting was allowed. The first player who was out received the "stipulated amount from the other 15, the second from the other 14 and so on."<sup>32</sup>

There is a reference to another game called *Bisat-i-Nishat* (the carpet of enjoyment) during the reign of Humayun. The circles on the board were named after planets and "different sections of men, Sayyids, Ulemas and Indian officers, were asked to sit in accordance with one of the seven planets which were appropriate to it in the circle which corresponded therewith." The dice carried human figures in different postures. The player had to sit in the position shown on the dice after he had thrown it.<sup>33</sup>

### Nard

*Nard* or backgammon has been mentioned as a game introduced into Hindustan by the Muslims. It was played with 30 pieces in two sets of 15, each set having its distinct colour on a square wooden board divided into 24 squares of equal sizes.<sup>34</sup>

### Pachisi

*Pachisi* was another ancient Hindu game enjoyed frequently by Akbar. The boards of this game were marked out on a marble square in a quadrangle, in the Agra Fort and Fatehpur Sikri. Akbar is said to have used slave girls as pieces to play this game with.<sup>35</sup>

The games of *gutis*<sup>36</sup> were popular with the rural as well as the urban population. *Do guti*, *tre guti*, *nau guti* and *bara guti* were the names assigned to its different types. Two pieces were used in *do guti* and placed alternately on any one of the cross-points until the movements of the adversary were checkmated. *Tre guti* was played with three pieces and nine pieces were employed in *nau guti*. The Madhya Pradesh game of *gutis* resembles closely the *bara guti*<sup>37</sup> of the Punjab. Of the 23 cross-points 22 are filled with ballets of two different kinds, each player having eleven, leaving the central point vacant. The

usual rule of jumping over, if there be a vacant place in the next, hold good in all these games.

Some light has been thrown on the sedentary games of India by H. C. Dasgupta<sup>38</sup> and Sunder Lal Hora.<sup>39</sup> The investigations of Jotinder Mohan Datta<sup>40</sup> and others confirm the view that these games were prevalent in India from very early times with slight variations in names and details in various parts of the country. In *tant-fant*<sup>41</sup>, called *tin-guti pait pait* by Dasgupta, the game is played between two persons each having his three distinctive pieces on the three cross-points of his side of the square, moving one to the centre to begin with. The game is won when all the three pieces belonging to a player lie in a straight line horizontally, vertically, or obliquely anywhere excepting the starting line. In *lau kata kati*<sup>42</sup>, 18 pieces are used, each player has nine distinctive pieces on the nine cross-points of the triangle, and shifts a piece to the centre and then follows the usual rules of draughts with the exception that only one piece be captured at a time. He who captures all the pieces of his opponent wins the game.

In *mughal pathan*<sup>43</sup> either player has 16 distinctive pieces arranged in his half of the board leaving the central line vacant. The usual rules of capture by jumping over a piece to an empty point opposite in a straight line apply and two or more captures are permitted at a time. In some places a horizontal line is drawn in each triangle necessitating 19 pieces for each player.

*Lam turki*<sup>44</sup> is played with nine pieces on a board of ten cross-points. The game consists of two stages : in the first, the player has to get all his nine pieces on the board, then in the second by the usual method of jumping over the piece to a vacant place in a straight line, he has to capture all his opponent's pieces except one. The pieces can be placed on the board in any way except that when a certain piece is placed on a cross-point, it has not to be moved from its place. *Sat gol* which resembles the *hasia* game known as *mawkarkatya* and another game *kaooas* have also been described by Dasgupta.<sup>45</sup>

*Bhag chal*<sup>46</sup>, *bhag chakar*, *chakrachal*, *bagh bandi*, *bagh batti* or *chhabis guti bhag chal* is a kind of tiger-play. The game was very popular among boys in Mughal days. The contest is between two players, one of whom usually plays with four tigers and the other uses twenty goats. The four tigers

are placed at the four points of the square and one by one the goats are brought on the board. As soon as the first goat appears on the board, one of the tigers rushes to capture it which is only possible when the goat is between the tiger and a vacant point in a straight line. No goat, according to the rules, is to be moved from its place on the board till all the twenty goats have been placed on the board one by one. Then the pieces move forward and backward on adjacent vacant places. The effort of the player in possession of the goats is to checkmate the movements of the tigers. The play is finished when either all the goats are annihilated or tigers checkmated.<sup>47</sup>

*Golekuish*<sup>48</sup>, another game, consists of seven concentric circles divided by three diameters thus having 42 points in which the diameters meet the circles. Two players play the game; one has a large number of goats and the other plays with only one tiger. The rest of the rules are similar.

*Bheri-bakri* (sheep and the goat) which is an interesting game deserves mention. The game was played between two players, each having eight pieces (black for sheep and white for goats) arranged in his eight compartments. The four pieces of *cowries* regulate the movements of the pieces. A player can move his pieces from his original home only if he gets a *poa* to his credit and then advances it according to the numbers gained by the throw of the *cowries*. If, according to the numbers shown by the *cowries*, one player's piece is to be moved to a place in possession of his adversary, the latter's piece is captured. Some of the rules are: one player can play with one piece only at a time unless it is captured. For all points of one *poa*, it is usual for the player to move the pieces from the original compartments. The pieces are moved from right to left in the neutral row and left to right in that of his adversary. The player who captures all the pieces is the winner.<sup>49</sup>

### Chaugan

*Chaugan*, called polo today, was an all-absorbing recreation for the Mughal kings<sup>50</sup> and nobles. Ladies of the royal household also sometimes took part in the game.<sup>51</sup> Commoners could be spectators only and not participants.<sup>52</sup> It appears that certain internal and external troubles during the reigns of Babar and Humayun brought about its temporary suspension. Akbar

later on revived it.<sup>53</sup> Of all the games he liked it most, and Abul Fazl writes : "The occupation of *chaugan* acquired a predominance over other forms of pleasure and the Emperor spent most of his time in it."<sup>54</sup> He invented fiery balls (illuminated balls)—a device which made the playing of the game on dark nights possible.<sup>55</sup> All the Mughal emperors showed keen interest in the game and *chaugan* playing-fields were marked out and reserved at several places. The most famous of them all were at Fatehpur Sikri and Agra.<sup>56</sup> Two players of outstanding distinction, Mir Sharif and Mir Ghiasuddin, made a name for themselves during Akbar's reign.<sup>57</sup>

It was the usual practice that not more than ten players, five on each side, should take part in the game at a time. But many more were kept on the waiting list, two of whom replaced another two in the field after every twenty minutes. The game was played on horseback, each player holding in his hand a *chaugan* stick with a crooked end. The ball was taken hold of by that end and was either slowly taken to the circle by the players or was forcibly hit, the horseman galloping after it to pass it between the posts which was "equivalent to goal."<sup>58</sup> The other party would oppose the man hitting the ball and then the two parties "struggled together and there was wrestling between them. It was indeed a wonderful spectacle."<sup>59</sup>

### Hockey

In Bengali literature there is a reference to the playing of *dhophari*. This was in fact a hockey game played with a crooked stick and a ball in the rural areas.<sup>60</sup>

A game known as *geru* was very popular among children in Bengal. It was played by two parties of boys with a ball. One party threw the ball and if the other party was able to catch it, they scored a point. It may have some resemblance with the present game of volleyball.<sup>61</sup>

The late Sir Denison Ross had a painting of the reign of Jahangir which shows a game of hockey in progress with pole-sticks, while the Emperor is watching it.<sup>62</sup>

### Wrestling

Wrestling or *kushti* was considered to be not merely a pastime in Mughal times, but a real necessity for the daily exercise

of the limbs and the body. It was pursued by the king, nobles and commoners alike. In Vijayanagar even women took part in wrestling contests.<sup>63</sup>

There was a certain set of rules to be observed by the participants at a wrestling contest and those who broke them were not only debarred from future matches but also, sometimes, given exemplary punishment. Many wrestling matches took place under the royal patronage and the Mughal kings and princes took delight in seeing them and heartening the contestants by their presence. The winners were profusely rewarded.<sup>64</sup>

### Boxing

Boxing, too, was a favourite pastime during the Mughal age. According to De Laet, "they enjoy looking at boxing matches and at conjuring."<sup>65</sup> Akbar was specially fond of this sport.<sup>66</sup> He kept a large number of Persian and Turani boxers at the court. Manucci also refers to this game.<sup>67</sup> Stone-throwers were also encouraged and kept on regular monthly remuneration.<sup>68</sup>

### Races

Horse-racing<sup>69</sup> was a source of entertainment prevalent among the high-class Mughal nobles who took part in the game and "rode their fiery steeds."

Dog-racing<sup>70</sup> was also not unknown. Akbar took great delight in it.<sup>71</sup>

### Martial sports

Martial sports had a special fascination for the people. Archery<sup>72</sup> and swordsmanship<sup>73</sup> were the order of the day. Every young man with ambition was expected to be good at the bow and the sword. Matches and contests were held, and rewards offered. Annual *ham* fights on *Onam* festival were held in Kerala and some other parts of South India.<sup>74</sup>

### Hunting

Hunting<sup>75</sup> was one of the best means of amusement and recreation during the Mughal times and was indulged in by the king, nobles and commoners.<sup>76</sup> Costly and dangerous

expeditions were the privilege of the chosen few and the quarry consisted of elephants, lions, tigers, buffaloes and wild goats. Being Muhammadans, the Mughal monarchs refrained from hunting boars.<sup>77</sup> Jahangir had made it a custom to hunt male tigers only.<sup>78</sup> Lion-hunting was exclusively reserved for the king.<sup>79</sup> Elephant-hunting, too, could not be indulged in without the special permission of the king. Permission was granted sparingly and usually to professional hunters only.<sup>80</sup> All sorts of beasts, such as dogs, deer, elephants, etc. were especially trained for hunting purposes. According to Hawkins, the king used to keep 3,000 deer, 400 ounces, and 4,000 hawks for hunting.<sup>81</sup> If we are to believe Manucci, Daud Khan, a noble, spent two hundred and fifty thousand rupees every year for the maintenance of his animals.<sup>82</sup> Dogs were in great demand and Jahangir imported dogs of excellent breed from England<sup>83</sup> and Kabul.

Akbar invented a special kind of hunting called *qamar-gha*<sup>84</sup> hunt which became very popular with the Mughal kings.<sup>85</sup> Every successive emperor took a lively interest in it and associated nobles as well as the people in this sport.<sup>86</sup> A special site, where wild animals of various kinds could be found in abundance, was selected for this great hunt. Sometimes the hunt was arranged exclusively for only one kind of game, like Jahangir's red-deer hunt in Kabul.<sup>87</sup> The animals were driven ordinarily from an area of 40 *kos* in every direction,<sup>88</sup> by a large number of beaters, sometimes as many as 50,000,<sup>89</sup> and the ring was contracted gradually till it became so narrow as to enable the king to go alone mounted on a horse<sup>90</sup> and accompanied by one or two attendants "to kill them with various weapons." Subsequently the nobles and after them the people<sup>91</sup> were permitted to take part in this chase. Ultimately the whole party would "give the reins to their horses." This sport used to last for a week or more.<sup>92</sup>

Elephant-catching, an ancient game, was enjoyed by the people from a very early time.<sup>93</sup> It was, like tiger-hunting<sup>94</sup>, an exclusive royal game during Mughal times. But special permission was granted to professional hunters.<sup>95</sup>

Four methods of elephant-catching<sup>96</sup> and of tiger-hunting<sup>97</sup> have been described in the *Ain*, which may be read by the curious reader in the English translation of that book. The

methods of hunting of various other animals like leopards, asses,<sup>98</sup> antelopes,<sup>99</sup> cheetas,<sup>100</sup> water-fowls,<sup>101</sup> khargoshes,<sup>102</sup> buffaloes,<sup>103</sup> deer,<sup>104</sup> roe bucks and does<sup>105</sup> are described in detail in various records of the period. An interesting method of catching sparrows has been described by Baizid Biyat in his work *Mukhtasar*.<sup>106</sup>

Shooting of birds<sup>107</sup> was a common hobby and a source of entertainment both for the rich and the poor. The former sometimes used guns, but bows and arrows were most commonly employed. According to Terry, their bows were actually made of buffalo horns, glued together, and the arrows were of light reeds<sup>108</sup> (little canes) "excellently headed and feathered."<sup>109</sup> They were skilled archers and would even kill flying birds.<sup>110</sup> Hawking, too, was common and trained hawks would "strike the wild fowl in mid air" and bring the prey down.<sup>111</sup> *Baz*, *shahin*, *shungar*, *burkat*, and falcons were trained and made use of in the hunting of birds, such as doves, pigeons, etc.<sup>112</sup>

### Fishing

Fishing was much in vogue in India during the Mughal period both as a recreation and as a profession. The use of nets for catching fish was not totally unknown,<sup>113</sup> but professional fishermen did not have recourse to it. A special type of net called *safrā* (or *bhanwar jal* in Hindi) was used.<sup>114</sup>

Of all the Mughal emperors,<sup>115</sup> Jahangir enjoyed this sport most. On one occasion he caught 766 fish.<sup>116</sup> He was specially enamoured of *rahu*, "which is the best of all the fishes found in India." But the real amusement of all the Mughal emperors consisted in "stocking the canals with tame fish."

### Boating

Boats were, no doubt, used mostly as a means of transport for crossing rivers, but sometimes nobles did refresh themselves by boating on rivers and lakes.<sup>117</sup> Pleasure boats called *more pankhs* or *bajras* were constructed for this purpose for the nobles.<sup>118</sup> They were extraordinarily low, slender and long with 20 to 30 beautifully painted oars on either side.<sup>119</sup> The noble took his seat either in front or in the middle on an elaborately constructed platform with a covering overhead as a



protection against sun and rain. When rich men<sup>120</sup> moved out with their families they used great lighters (boats) with houses for the womenfolk in the middle.

### Riding

Horse-riding<sup>121</sup> was a common sight—a means of transport and a recreation for the rich who sometimes also enjoyed elephant-riding, a common and favourite pastime of the Mughal kings.<sup>122</sup> Princesses also used to enjoy horse-riding. Akbar would sometimes ride a camel.<sup>123</sup>

### Animal-fights

Getting animals to fight was one of the popular amusements and recreations of the age. The people had to content themselves with the less expensive fighting of goats, rams, cocks, quads, stags,<sup>124</sup> antelopes, dogs and bulls<sup>125</sup> to entertain their friends with.<sup>126</sup> Young boys favoured fights among *bul-buls* and sometimes quails which “make some sport.”<sup>127</sup> The king and nobles amused themselves with costly and dangerous combats between elephants,<sup>128</sup> tigers, deer, *cheetas*, boars,<sup>129</sup> leopards, bulls and other wild beasts.<sup>130</sup> The hazardous fight between a tiger and a bull has also been referred to in the *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*.<sup>131</sup> Camel-fights<sup>132</sup> were an extraordinary sport for which camels were imported from Ajmer, Jodhpur, Bikaner, and Gujarat.<sup>133</sup>

The Mughal kings also took delight in seeing men without arms engaged with beasts at their own free will.<sup>134</sup> The volunteers, if successful, had a chance to make their life's fortunes. Those brave men who firmly stood their ground were enlisted among the *mansabdars*.<sup>135</sup> Convicts condemned to death were sometimes given the option to fight a hungry lion or an elephant, specially kept for the purpose. They were supplied with a dagger and, if victorious, their lives were usually spared.<sup>136</sup>

Betting on animal-fights was allowed and the people often indulged in it. The stakes on royal deer-combats were fixed for *mansabdars* from two rupees to eight *muhurs*, according to the status of the opponents, the deer-keeper, and the classes of the deer engaged.<sup>137</sup>

The harmless and cheap fights between goats, rams, cocks,

etc. were enjoyed by the common people in an open compound in front of their houses. Cock-fighting was very common among the higher middle class. Varthema witnessed a five-hour continuous fight at Tenasserim "so that at the end both remained dead."<sup>138</sup> Spacious grounds were reserved in important cities like Agra, Delhi, Fatehpur Sikri, etc. for the amusement of the urban population.<sup>139</sup>

A special amphitheatre<sup>140</sup> for animal-fighting was prepared under the command of Akbar. It was quite visible from the balcony of the royal palace over the Darshani Gate in Agra Fort. The king used to witness and enjoy the animal-fights through the "golden windows" of the gallery of his fort palace.<sup>141</sup>

Akbar took personal interest in elephant-fights and many a time "did apply himself to this sport and even engaged his royal elephants *Fauha* and *Lauga* in a tough encounter."<sup>142</sup> The fighting elephants would meet each other face to face on opposite sides of a wall, about four feet wide and six feet in height. The wall would give way after some spirited attacks and then there followed a fierce fight between the beasts under the direction of their *mahavats*.<sup>143</sup>

*Ishq-bazi* or pigeon-flying was primarily a sport of the common people. Mukundram's reference to it corroborates the view.<sup>144</sup> Nobles, too, enjoyed it and brought excellent pigeons from foreign countries, like Turan and Iran, to be trained for the game.<sup>145</sup> Akbar was very fond of it.<sup>146</sup> He studied the details of pigeon-flying and used to "scatter grain to allure the birds."<sup>147</sup>

*Charkah* and *bazi* were the names given to the two delightful performances staged by the royal pigeons.

### Magic shows and acrobatics

Jugglers, mountebanks, dancers, conjurers and magicians were all a source of recreation for the people. They were spread over the length and breadth of the country and formed the chief source of enjoyment for the rural population.

The "clever jugglers and funny tumblers" thronged the open places and streets of Agra<sup>148</sup> to exhibit their dexterity and agility.<sup>149</sup> Dr. Fryer saw everywhere a crowd of jugglers accompanying a group of *yogis*.<sup>150</sup> All such merry-makers,

according to Bernier, gathered in large numbers near the great royal square in Delhi<sup>151</sup> and showed their wonderful tricks. Thevenot,<sup>152</sup> Terry<sup>153</sup> and John Marshall<sup>154</sup> have described some remarkable feats of these *bazigars*. Babar was full of praise for Indian jugglers. Some of them would swallow the sword and thrust a knife into their nostrils.

The rope dancers called *nats* entertained the audience with their "wonderful acrobatic feats."<sup>155</sup> Some of them would train a monkey or two who showed some pleasing performances at the instance of their master.<sup>156</sup> Babar also refers to these ape-tricks. A juggler from Bengal brought an ape which performed wonderful tricks in front of Jahangir. The emperor took a ring from his finger and gave it to one of the boys to conceal. The ape at once spotted the boy "that had it."<sup>157</sup>

There is also a reference to the class of tiger-tamers in Bengal. They went about villages and towns with a tiger held by an iron chain and entertained the people by its performances.<sup>157\*</sup>

Dancing snakes,<sup>158</sup> usually deprived of their teeth and kept in baskets three or four in each, were taken around the streets by their masters to amuse the ladies and the children who gathered to see the snakes dance at the sound of the flute.

### Dancing

Dancing served as a pastime for the rich. It was usual to send for dancing girls on festive occasions.<sup>159</sup> They would play, sing and dance and entertain the guests.<sup>160</sup> Female dancers and public women were available in big cities at reasonable rates.<sup>161</sup> The *patar*<sup>162</sup> and rope-dancing<sup>163</sup> were very popular. *Akhara* was a special type of dance enjoyed by nobles.<sup>164</sup> Aurangzeb did away with this luxury. He ordered public women and dancing girls either to marry or to "clear out of his realm."<sup>165</sup>

### Music

Music, called the "talisman of knowledge" by Abul Fazl,<sup>166</sup> formed one of the most favourite pastimes.<sup>167</sup> Rural as well as urban people enjoyed it.<sup>168</sup> A few sweet stanzas from a holy book would lessen the hard task of the labourer

at work.<sup>169</sup> While laying bricks, repairing old shoes or making new ones, or engaged in other manual work, a group of labourers would repeat the "sacred ballads sometimes alternately, sometimes by the single persons, the rest answering in chorus."

A delightful and sweet-sounding rhythmical melody sung in chorus by the seamen busy with their oars would "keep up their spirits."<sup>170</sup> Young women of the countryside with pitchers on their heads would go to a well in the village early in the morning to fetch water. All the way to the well and back, they would sing in chorus, sometimes in batches of 20 or 30.<sup>171</sup> The rich and the nobles were good at music, both instrumental and vocal.<sup>172</sup> Among the different varieties of music, *dhrupat*, *chind*, *chruva*, *bangula*, *qawl*, *chutkalahi*, *taranah*, *lahchhari*, *chhand*, *sadara* and *desakha* were the most prominent.<sup>173</sup> *Kanchani* was the most favoured class at the court. All the Mughal kings, with the solitary exception of Aurangzeb,<sup>174</sup> were great patrons of music. Babar himself excelled in music, and composed songs. Bairam Khan, the well-known grandee of Humayun's court, was an expert musician. Akbar's reign produced Tan Sen<sup>175</sup> of immortal fame, besides Ram Das and many other front-rank musicians.<sup>176</sup> The reigns of Jahangir<sup>177</sup> and Shahjahan<sup>178</sup> were remarkable for the progress of vocal and instrumental music. The most famous musicians of Shahjahan's court were Lal Khan and Sawad Khan of Fatehpur. Rauza Qawal and Kabir surpassed in *qawalis*.<sup>179</sup>

### Theatrical performances

People had various other means of amusements also, such as theatrical performances. They were no doubt crude in character.<sup>180</sup> Smooth-faced boys were dressed up as women to take part in the drama.<sup>181</sup> In ancient and early medieval India, sometimes women also played the role of male actors but this practice was perhaps given up. It was usual to give dramatic representation to some scenes from the *Mahabharata* depicting the sterling qualities of Lord Krishna.<sup>182</sup> *Ram Lila* or the theatrical representation of scenes from the holy *Ramayana* were common during the annual Hindu festival of Dasehra.<sup>183</sup> Often Muslims also witnessed with their Hindu neighbours the musical play of the *Ramayana*.<sup>184</sup> There are also references to

the performances from the story of *Parshwanath Charitra* and *Harish Charitra* in Rajasthan. Love of the theatre was profound among the Mughals. The theatre, dance, and music had their prescribed hours. Some actors from Gujarat performed a piece before Shahjahan showing the maladministration in that kingdom.<sup>185</sup> A reference to buffoons is also found in the *Babarnama*.<sup>186</sup>

*Jashans*<sup>187</sup> were celebrated with great pomp and show, befitting such an occasion. After the dance and music came wine, which was served by beautiful maidens as the climax of the entertainment.

### Mushairas

*Mushairas* or poetical symposiums were frequently arranged. Renowned poets and guests were invited.<sup>188</sup> It served both as an education and a recreation for the guests and the spectators.

### Story-telling

Educated men and women—and there were many—would sometimes relax themselves by reading light literature, short stories, novels, poetry, etc. *Gulistan*, *Bostan* and *diwans* of various Persian poets were great favourites with those well-versed in Persian,<sup>189</sup> while stories from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* were studied by others both as recreation and religious instruction. It was usual to listen to stories of adventures, heroes and lovers before going to bed at night. Short stories were related to children by their mothers to allure them to early sleep.

It was common practice, especially among the rural folk, to pass their idle hours in solving riddles put to them by their friends. Mirza Haider was a famous riddle-writer in Akbar's reign.<sup>190</sup>

Witty persons<sup>191</sup> amused others with their humour. The kings also used to keep a jester at the court. The title of *Amir-ul-Zurfa* was granted to Maulana Shihab-ud-Din Ahmad by Humayun.<sup>192</sup> Jalal Khan was a "complete master of mirth and wit"<sup>193</sup> during Akbar's reign. Birbal was another outstanding figure remembered even now for his witty remarks.

### Gardening

Gardening was a hobby with kings and nobles.<sup>194</sup> Babar laid out symmetrical gardens and fitted them with fountains.<sup>195</sup> Akbar's beautiful gardens around Fatehabad are still remembered.<sup>196</sup> Jahangir and Shahjahan, too, planted many gardens and used to refresh themselves by occasional visits.<sup>197</sup> The people, particularly Kashmiris, took pleasure in skiffs upon the lakes.<sup>198</sup>

### Fairs

"The visits to periodical fairs and seats of pilgrimage were," writes Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "the sole joy of the Indian village population and men and women were passionately eager to undertake them."<sup>199</sup> Mathura, Allahabad, Banaras, Nasik, and Madura were the main religious centres of the Hindus, while Ajmer, Gulbarga, Nizamuddin Auliya and Burhanpore were the seats of Muslim pilgrimage.

### Smoking

Smoking the *hukka* and chewing betels were innocent amusements of the rural folk, particularly of the Muhammadans. Grose rightly observes: "Moors are much addicted to smoking" and frequently indulged in this luxury.<sup>200</sup> After their hard morning duties in the fields, Hindus, too, would sit cross-legged on their cots under some shady tree or in their homes and enjoy the hubble-bubble.<sup>201</sup>

### NOTES

1. Painting No. 537, I.A.E., 'Girls flying kites,' lent by C.A.A. Museum (Treasurywala collection). Kites are of fine flowery paper and triangular-shaped. Also see *Life in Rajasthan in the 14th and 15th Centuries* as depicted in the *Kanhadade-prabandhu*, *J.I.H.*, April 1960, p. 16.
2. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 186.
3. *Storia*, II, pp. 352-53.
4. Ashraf, *Life and Condition of the People of Hindustan*, p. 296.
5. Viz., *ashwapati, gajpati, narpati, gadhpati, dhanpati, dalpati*

- nawapati*, *tipati*, *surpati*, *asurpati*, *banpati* and *ahipati*. (*Ain*, I, 1939, pp. 318-319).
6. The last seven were renamed and reconstituted during Akbar's reign from dhanpati as king of assignments, *padshah-i-qimash*, *padshah-i-chang*, *padshah-i-zar-i-safid*, *padshah-i-shamsher*, *padshah-i-taj* and *padshah-i-ghulaman*. *Ain*, I, p. 319.
  7. The earliest reference to it, as Erskine notes, in oriental literature is in *Babarnama* when Babar sent a set of playing cards (*ganjafa*) to Shah Hasan in Tattah at the latter's repeated requests. *B.N.* (Bev.), p. 584, f.n.
  8. *B.N.*, p. 584 ; *Ain*, I, pp. 318-20 ; Roe's *Embassy*, (1926), p. 293.
  9. *Ain*, I, p. 319.
  10. *Ibid.*
  11. *Ibid.*, p. 318.
  12. *Ibid.* For later 18th-century Mughal cards, see "Ten Ivory Playing Cards" by Ajit Ghose, Calcutta, Painting No. 653, I.A.E.
  13. *Ain*, I, pp. 318-19.
  14. Gulbadan, *Humayunnama* (Persian), p. 77.
  15. Roe's *Embassy*, (1926), p. 293.
  16. *John Marshall in India*, p. 273 ; Della Valle, p. 405 ; Mandelslo, p. 66 ; De Laet, p. 405 ; Ovington, pp. 267-68.
  17. Alberuni's *India*, Trans., Edward C. Sachu, Vol. I, p. 183.
  18. Mandelslo, p. 66.
  19. *History of India*, Lane Poole, Vol. IV, p. 37.
  20. *Storia*, II, p. 460. For reference see Badaoni, II, pp. 25 and 314 Tr., II, pp. 18 and 324. Also Badaoni, III, pp. 298 and 339 ; Tr., III, pp. 408 and 467 ; *Maasin*, I, pp. 811-12.
  21. For picture see "Indian Information", Oct. 1946.
  22. *Ain*, I, p. 320.
  23. *Storia*, II, pp. 460-61.
  24. *J.P.A.S.B.* (1893), Pt. I ; *Ain*, III, (Sarkar), p. 328. *Early Travels in India*, pp. 312-13 ; Macauliffe, I, p. 162.
  25. Sarkar, *Studies in Mughal India*, p. 82.
  26. *Ain*, I, p. 316.

27. *Ibid.*
28. No reference to the game in contemporary Persian records of Babar and Humayun is available.
29. *A.N.*, II, p. 368 ; Tr., II, p. 534.
30. See description, *Ain*, I, p. 315, which confirms the fact.
31. *Ain*, I, p. 316. For a reference to another game called *Selah*, see *Ain*, III, (Sarkar), p. 328.
32. *Ain*, I, pp. 316-18.
33. *A.N.*, I, p. 361 ; Tr., I, p. 649 ; *Qanoon-i-Humayun*, pp. 80-81.
34. Khwandamir, pp. 155-56. Persians call it *Takht-i-Nadir Shah*. For the game see Burton Sindh, p. 292. According to Ferishta (I, p. 150) it was invented by Buzruj Mihr, minister of Nausherwan, a Persian king. Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 333.
35. The game is also represented in a painting in the caves of Ajanta. *Agra : Historical and Descriptive* by Syed Muhammad Latif, pp. 86, 142.
36. These games in stone exist even now in the palaces at Agra Fort, Fatehpur Sikri, and Chittor. They have been described here on the basis of the above, and tally with the account given by Mr. Dasgupta in his articles "A few types of Indian Sedentary Games" in *Journal and Proceedings of Asiatic Society of Bengal and Calcutta Review*. A reference has therefore been made to it.
37. *Calcutta Review*, 1923, (Jan.-March), pp. 510-13.
38. Dasgupta, *Journ. Proc. Asiatic Soc., Bengal* (N.S.), XX, (1924), pp. 165, 167, ; XXII, (1926), pp. 212-13.
39. *Journ. Proc. Asiatic Soc., Bengal*, XXIX, (1933), p. 5.
40. *Ibid.* Article No. 17 ; and *J.P.A.S.B.*, IV, 1938, Article No. 10. Also see Dr. Bhandarkar's article in *Journ. Bombay Branch R.A.S.*, Vol. 17, Pt. 2, pp. 7-8.
41. Mr. B. Dasgupta has described this type of game from Vikrampore (*Quart. Journ., Bangiya Sahitya Parishad*, XIV pp. 242-43), under the local name of *tin-guti pait pait*.
42. Humphries (*Journ. Proc. Asiatic Soc., Bengal*, II, p. 123, 1906), refers to an identical game played at Bargarh in Uttar Pradesh. A similar game is played in Madhya Pradesh described by H.C. Dasgupta, *Journ. Proc. Asiatic*



*Soc, Bengal*, XXII, (1926), p. 212, though board is different and 22 ballets are needed.

43. In the vernacular reference is made to the well-known wars between the Mughals and the Pathans in Bengal. The game described by Mr. B. Dasgupta (*Quart. Journ., Bangiya Sahitya Parishad*, XIV, pp. 239-40.) under the title of *sola guti mangal pata* in which reference is made to 16 pieces. Similar game is *atharah guti* of Uttar Pradesh described by Humphries (*J.P.A.S.B.*, II, 1906, p. 121), *atharajutiala teora* of Madhya Pradesh. The game is called *lam pursi* or *sipahi kat* in Teesta valley where each player has 18 distinctive men. (*J.P.A.S.B.*, N.S., XXIX, p. 103).
44. Humphries describes a similar game under the name *kowwa dand* in Uttar Pradesh, *kaooa* is another game described by Mr. Dasgupta (*J.P.A.S.B.*, N.S., XX, 1924-25, p. 167) as prevalent in Madhya Pradesh, uses the same figure but played differently. *J.P.A.S.B.*, N.S., II (1908), p. 126.
45. *J.P.A.S.B.*, II (1924), pp. 168-69.
46. *J.P.A.S.B.*, II (1906), pp. 123-24, 145 ; XIII (1927), p. 297.
47. In *chakrachal* the movements of the pieces in all directions, backward, forward and sideways, but always in a straight line, are indicated.
48. Dasgupta, *J.P.A.S.B.*, N.S., XX, 1924-25, pp. 166-67.
49. *J.P.A.S.B.*, N.S., XIX, 1924, pp. 71-74.
50. Badaoni, II, p. 70 ; Tr., II, p. 69. The game is said to have been played differently in Gujarat where they had "two sets of goals" and the ball was "made of Paribhadra tree". B.P. Mazumdar, *Socio-Economic History of Northern India*, p. 255.
51. Quoted in *Humayun Badshah* by S.K. Banerji.
52. *A.N.*, III, p. 173 ; Tr., III, p. 242.
53. *A.N.*, I, p. 219 ; Tr., I, pp. 443-44, "The game of *chaugan* and wolf-running for which Tabriz was famous, stopped due to riots, was revived again." *A.N.*, I, p. 219 ; Tr., I, p. 443.
54. *T.A.*, II, p. 315.
55. *Ibid.*
56. *Ain*, II, p. 180.
57. Abul Fazl (*A.N.*, II, p. 151 ; Tr., II, p. 233) mentions the

playground just outside the fort of Agra; Badaoni (II, p. 70; Tr., II, p. 69) refers to Kirawali near Agra where Akbar used to play polo. For Fatehpur see *Ain*, II, p. 180. Beglar Khan was another well-known player. *M.U.*, Trans., Vol. I, p. 399.

58. *Ain*, I, pp. 309-10; *T.A.*, II, p. 315.

59. *T.A.*, II, p. 315.

60. "A Few Aspects of Social History of Bengal," Journal of Department of Letters, 1922, p. 215. Also see Mazumdar, B.P., *Socio-Economic History of Northern India*, p. 255.

61. *Ibid.*, p. 216.

62. A.K. Majumdar, *The Chaulukyas of Gujarat*, p. 359; also see B.P. Mazumdar, *Socio-Economic History of Northern India*, p. 254; Abhayatilaka Gani, the commentator of Hem Chandra's *Divyasyaya* tells us that the game was quite popular in the Mathura region, and Shri Krishna played it in his early life. *Ibid.*, p. 255.

63. K.A.N. Sastri, *A History of South India*, p. 313. For wrestling grounds in Vijayanagar and gymnasium at Tanjore, refer to Saletore, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 420.

64. *B.N.*, pp. 656, 660, 683; *A.N.*, I, pp. 226 and 248; Tr., I, pp. 456 and 487; *A.N.*, III, p. 329; Tr., III, p. 482. Also see *Ain*, I, p. 263. For Jahangir's interest in wrestling, see R. & B., I, p. 335; for Shahjahan, *Storia*, I, p. 191. Also see *Journal of India Art*, April 1916, Vol. 17, plate 12.

65. De Laet, p. 82.

66. Monserrate, p. 198.

67. *Storia*, I, p. 191.

68. *Ain*, I, p. 263.

69. Badaoni, II, p. 70; Tr. II, p. 69. Deccanis (Marathas) were famous for their horsemanship. (*Tuzuk*, Lowe, p. 92; Nicholas Downton in *Purchas*, IV, p. 225). Rajputs and Gujaratis have also been praised for their skill in horse-riding. (*Padmavat*, Hindi, p. 285 and Barbosa, I, p. 109). Also see K.A.N. Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 313.

70. Badaoni, II, p. 70; Tr. II, p. 69.

71. *Ibid.*, p. 84; Tr., II, p. 84.

72. "It was ordered on Monday that a party of young nobles and the army should practise archery." *Intkhab-i Jahangiri*, E. & D., VI, pp. 449-50. His Majesty shot at *qabag*, "the

- arrow struck the ligature of the golden ball which experienced marksmen had failed to hit." *A.N.*, I, p. 335 ; Tr., I, p. 613. Humayun practised archery *vide Tazkirat-ul-Waqyat*, Stewart, p. 69. *Humayunnama*, Khwandamir, p. 149 ; and for Akbar's interest in archery, *Ain*, I, p. 262.
73. See *Ain*, I, pp. 262-63 ; Bernier, p. 263 (1891).
  74. Forbes in his *Oriental Memoirs*. Also see P.K.S. Raja, *Medieval Kerala*, Annamalai University, pp. 266-67. For hunting at Vijayanagar refer to Saletore, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 421-23.
  75. For rules and regulations for hunting expeditions see *H.N.*, Gul, p. 197 ; *Ain*, I, (1873), pp. 64-65, 116 ; *A.N.*, II, p. 164 ; Tr., II, p. 253 ; *A.N.*, III, p. 220 ; Tr., III, p. 309 ; R. & B., I, pp. 184 and 384 ; E. & D. VI, p. 435 ; Hawkins in *Early Travels*, pp. 106, 108 ; Purchas, IV, p. 47 ; Tavernier, p. 125. For hunting grounds see Pelsaert's *India*, pp. 33-34 and R. & B., I, p. 137.
  76. For a beautiful painting of *Shikar* by Night see plate XXIII (Persian 1569) in *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*. Another painting of Royal hunting may be seen at Indian Art Exhibition. Painting not numbered but is of Bikaner Palace collection.
  77. Tavernier, p. 125 ; *Storia*, IV, p. 255.
  78. R. & B., I, p. 286.
  79. Bernier, p. 218. Painting No. 609, I.A.E., Mughal Period : "The Emperor Jahangir hunting lion on an elephant."
  80. See *T.A.*, II, p. 349 for tiger-hunting.
  81. Hawkins in *Early Travels in India*, p. 104.
  82. *Storia*, IV, p. 255.
  83. Roe's *Embassy*, p. 182.
  84. *Qamargha* is a Turkish word denoting a great battle in which a large number of wild animals are driven into an enclosure and killed. Phillott describes it in *Ain-i-Akbari* as a "chase for which drivers are employed." The game is apparently enclosed in a living ring. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 282.
  85. Being a Turkish game, *qamargha* must have been in vogue during the reigns of Babar and Humayun, but no documentary evidence is traceable.
  86. Badaoni, II, p. 94 ; Tr., II, pp. 93-94.

87. R. & B., I, p. 120. For *qamargha* hunting expeditions see Badaoni, II, p. 93 ; Tr., II, pp. 93-94 ; *Tuzuk*, Lowe, pp. 69-70 ; *M.A.* (Urdu), p. 26.
88. *T.A.*, II, p. 315. Jahangir's courtier Ilavardhi Khan invented a special net called *bawar* (rope) for this hunt. For details refer to *Maasir*, I, p. 668.
89. *Tarikh-i-Alfi*, p. 627 quoted in *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, Trans., B. De, II, p. 328 f.n.
90. *T.A.*, II, p. 328.
91. *Ibid.*
92. *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri* (Urdu), p. 41.
93. *Ain*, I, p. 295.
94. Pelsaert's *India*, p. 52 ; Petermundy, II, pp. 126-28 ; *T.A.*, II, p. 349 ; *Ahkam-i-Alamgiri*, Sarkar, Persian, p. 23 ; Tr., p. 60.
95. *A New History of East Indies*, I, pp. 60-61.
96. *Ain*, I, pp. 284-85, 296 ; *Storia*, III, pp. 76-77 ; Thevenot, Chap. XXIV, pp. 45-46.
97. *Ain*, I, p. 293. Also see *Storia*, I, pp. 192-94.
98. *T.A.*, II, p. 363 ; *A.N.*, II, pp. 359-60 ; Tr., II, p. 522.
99. Thevenot, Chap. XXI, p. 38 ; Petermundy, II, p. 112 ; Bernier, p. 218 ; Ovington, p. 271 ; R. & B., I, p. 129.
100. *A.N.*, II, p. 121 ; Tr., II, p. 186 ; *Ibid*, II, p. 156 ; Tr., II, p. 242.
101. *Ain*, I, pp. 307-8. For Jahangir's skill in shooting birds see *Tuzuk*, Lowe, pp. 36-37.
102. *Storia*, III, p. 90.
103. *Ain*, I, p. 304.
104. *B.N.*, pp. 491-92 ; *Storia*, III, p. 85.
105. *A New History of East Indies*, I, p. 86.
106. *J.I.H.*, Vol. IV, 1925, p. 49.
107. *Ain*, I, p. 304 ; Thevenot, III, p. 38.
108. De Laet, p. 82.
109. *Early Travels in India*, p. 312.
110. *Ibid* ; De Laet, p. 82 ; Godino in *J.P.A.S.B.*, IV, 1938, p. 541.
111. *Ain*, II, p. 351.
112. *Early Travels*, p. 104 ; *Tuzuk*, pp. 36-37.
113. There is a reference to the use of nets in fishing by Jahangir in *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* : "I went for fishing in boats. Two

- hundred and eight large fish came into one net, half of them species of *rahu*." R. & B., I, p. 342.
114. *Waqyat-i-Jahangiri*, E. and D., VI, p. 311.
  115. For reference to fishing see *B.N.*, p. 406; *Tazkirat-ul-Waqyat*, Stewart, p. 109. *Ain* is silent about this amusement, but Akbar did enjoy it. See *A.N.*, II, p. 76; Tr., II, p. 117; *Tuzuk*, Lowe, p. 188. For a description of the method of catching fish in those days see *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri* (Urdu), pp. 115-16 and Manrique, II, p. 232.
  116. *Tuzuk*, Lowe, p. 188.
  117. *A.N.*, II, p. 76; Tr. II, p. 117; *Ain*, II, p. 112; *John Marshall in India*, p. 170; Godino in *J.P.A.S.B.*, IV, Letters, p. 551.
  118. Petermundy, II, p. 158. Painting No. 513, I.A.E., early 18th century shows a prince boating with his beloved and hunting black buck. Note the fine wooden boat and the oars.
  119. Petermundy, II, p. 158. For contemporary boats and *shikaras* see a beautiful painting "Jahangir crossing a lake." Plate XIV of "The Court Painters of the Grand Moghuls" by Lawrence Binyon.
  120. For boating excursions of kings see *B.N.*, pp. 387, 406; Khwandamir, pp. 135-37; R. & B., II, p. 151.
  121. For horse-riding see *Early Travels*, p. 312. Della Valle, p. 405; *Ain*, II, p. 122. For a painting see photo facing p. 15 of the *Lady of the Lotus, Rupmati, Queen of Mandu*, by Ahmad-ul-Umri, trans., L.M. Crump.
  122. For elephant-riding see *A.N.*, II, p. 151; Tr., II, p. 234; *A.N.*, III, p. 92; Tr., III, p. 129; *Storia*, I, p. 133; Sir William Foster, *The Voyage of Nicholas Downton to the East Indies* (1614-15), Series II, Vol. LXXXII, London, 1939, p. 144.
  123. *A.N.*, II, pp. 71-72; Tr., II, p. 111.
  124. Thevenot, Chap. XXI, p. 38.
  125. Badaoni, II, p. 392; Tr., II, p. 406.
  126. *B.N.*, p. 259.
  127. Petermundy, II, p. 128.
  128. Even in *Babarnama* camel and elephant fights have been mentioned at Agra. *B.N.*, p. 631. For elephant-fights refer to *Ain* (Bloch.), p. 131; *Early Travels in India* (ed.

- Foster), p. 108 ; Petermundy, II, pp. 126-28 ; Bernier, pp. 177-78. Elephant-fights were a royal prerogative and Muhammad Muazzam who once enjoyed it at Sirhind was severely rebuked by Aurangzeb. J.N. Sarkar, *Anecdotes of Aurangzib*, p. 57.
129. Badaoni, II, p. 392 ; Tr. II, p. 406.
  130. Mandelslo, p. 43.
  131. R. & B., I, p. 157. A beautiful painting No. 640, I.A.E., 17th century shows "Jahangir witnessing a deadly fight between a snake and a spider." This incident actually occurred on the emperor's journey from Kashmir, A.D. 1607.
  132. For a painting of a camel-fight see painting No. 605, I.A.E.
  133. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 143.
  134. Mandelslo, p. 43.
  135. *Intikhab-i-Jahangir Shahi*, E. & D., VI, pp. 449-50.
  136. *Waqyat-i-Jahangiri*, E. & D., VI, p. 347 ; Della Valle, pp. 450-51.
  137. *Ain*, I, (1873), pp. 218-20.
  138. Varthema, p. 75. In this connection see *Islamic Culture*, Vol. XXXV, No. 1, Jan. 1961 : "Amusements and Games of the Great Mughals." p. 23.
  139. Petermundy, II, p. 50.
  140. Ranking's *Historical Researches*, p. 284.
  141. De Laet, pp. 39-40 ; Hawkins in *Early Travels*, p. 184 ; for Delhi and Burhanpur, Thevenot, III, Chap. XXII, p. 42 and Petermundy, II, p. 50 respectively.
  142. A.N., II, p. 60 ; Tr. II, p. 91 ; Nizamuddin (*T.A.*, II, p. 223, f.n. 2 and p. 224) mentions fight between the royal elephants which he names *Fatuha* and *Baksha*. Refer to *Maasir*, I, p. 183 for a fight between Jahangir's elephant Giranbar and Khusrâu's elephant Aprup. For a favourite elephant of Jahangir see painting No. 623, I.A.E., Mughal, 17th century. For the days usually reserved for animal-fights refer to *Early Travels*, pp. 108, 184 ; Roe's *Embassy*, p. 107 ; Petermundy, II, p. 127 ; Manrique, II, p. 162 ; Mandelslo, p. 43.
  143. Bernier, p. 277 ; *Early Travels*, p. 301 ; Petermundy, II, p. 127. For a picture see *Storia*, I, p. 208 ; and Bernier,

- p. 276. Also see Ranking's *Historical Researches*, p. 284.
144. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, pp. 185-86.
  145. *Ain*, I, p. 310.
  146. Ghani, III, p. 7. In fact, it is said, he was engaged in pigeon-flying when the news of the death of Abul Fazl was conveyed to him. *A.N.* (Persian), Vol. III, p. 733.
  147. *A.N.*, I, p. 318 ; Tr., I, p. 589. Akbar was said to have kept 20,000 pigeons, out of which 500 were declared *Khas*. *Ain* (Bloch.), pp. 299-302. The number increased to 10,000 in the reign of Jahangir. Also see *Early Travels in India*, pp. 103-4.
  148. Pelsaert's *India*, p. 72.
  149. *Ain*, I. (1873), p. 157.
  150. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 443.
  151. Bernier, p. 243.
  152. Thevenot, III, Chap. XLV, pp. 77-78.
  153. *Early Travels*, pp. 312-13 ; Terry, p. 190.
  154. *John Marshall in India*, p. 254 ; Norris, *Embassy to Aurangzib*, pp. 166-67. For feats of these jugglers see Petermundy, II, p. 254 ; Ovington, pp. 258-59 ; *B.N.*, pp. 633-34 ; *Ain*, III, (Sarkar), p. 132, also f.n. 3 ; Badaoni, II, pp. 367-68 ; Tr. II, pp. 378-79 ; R. & B., I, p. 143.
  155. *Ain*, III, p. 258. Norris, *Embassy to Aurangzib*, pp. 166-67.
  156. *Early Travels*, pp. 312-13 ; De Laet, p. 82 ; *B.N.*, p. 492.
  157. Della Valle, p. 460.
  - 157\*. *Visva Bharati Annals*, 1945, Vol. I, pp. 118-19.
  158. Ovington, p. 261 ; *Early Travels*, pp. 312-13 ; Della Valle, p. 405 ; De Laet, p. 82 ; Pedro Teixeira, pp. 224-25.
  159. For a nauch in celebration of Akbar's birthday see photo-facing p. 160 of *Humayunnama*.
  160. Petermundy, II, p. 216. *Trade in India* by Charles Lockter, p. 234. For a photo of dancers see Petermundy, II, p. 217.
  161. *Storia*, II, p. 9. For good dancers of Multan see Thevenot, III, Chap. XXXII, p. 55 ; of Masulipatam, see *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 182 ; of Vijayanagar, refer to Saletore, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 169-71. A dancing-hall for the ladies of the royal household has also been referred to. *Ibid*, p. 409.

162. *Ain*, III, p. 258.
163. Badaoni, II, p. 95 : Tr., II, p. 97.
164. See for details *Ain*, III, p. 258.
165. *Storia*, II, p. 9 ; Norris, *Embassy to Aurangzeb*, p. 149.
166. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 611.
167. Mandelslo, p. 310. "They delight much in music."
168. De Laet, p. 82.
169. Ovington, pp. 291-92.
170. *Ibid.*
171. Purchas' *India*, p. 12.
172. For Baz Bahadur see *A.N.*, II, p. 136 ; Tr., II, p. 211. For Ghani Beg of Sind, see *A.N.*, III, p. 260 ; Tr., III, p. 378 ; *Maasir*, I, p. 806.
173. *Ain*, III, p. 252 ; Manrique II, p. 196 ; *Early Travels*, p. 144. For a list of musical instruments like *naqqarah*, *dhol*, *daf*, *vina kinar*, *rabab*, *sarbin*, *shahna*, etc. refer *Ibid*, pp. 255-56.
174. *Mirat-i-Alam*, E. & D., VII, p. 158 ; *M.A.* (Urdu), p. 384.
175. *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, p. 174.
176. *Ain*, I, (1873), pp. 611-12.
177. R. & B., I, pp. 331, 292, 303 ; II, p. 148 ; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, p. 308.
178. Mandelslo, p. 23 ; Qazwini, *Badshahnama*, p. 160a. For Krishna Deva Raya of Vijayanagar's patronage of music refer to *Epigraphia Indica*, I, p. 401.
179. *Islamic Culture*, 1945, pp. 356-59. S. Mazumdar, B.P., *Socio-Economic History of Northern India*, p. 252.
180. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 187. For dramatic performances a little before our period refer to B.P. Mazumdar, *Socio-Economic History of Northern India*, Calcutta, 1960, pp. 251-54. For theatres at Vijayanagar refer to Saletore, *op. cit.*, II, p. 416.
181. *Ain*, III, p. 257.
182. Macauliffe, I, p. 57. Chaitanya once played the role of Rukmini in a play "Krishna Yatra". Kennedy, *The Chaitanya Movement*, p. 18.
183. About ten days before this great festival, which marks the victory of Sri Rama over Ravana, the whole story of Sri Rama's adventures is shown.



184. Quoted from *Chaitanya Bhagavata*, in *Indian Culture*, Vol. X, 1943, p. 121.
185. *B.N.*, p. 400.
186. *Storia*, I, pp. 198-99.
187. *B.N.*, p. 330b. ; G., p. 28-29 ; *A.N.*, II, p. 309, quoted in Ashraf's *Life and Condition of the People of Hindustan*.
188. *H.N.*, G., pp. 113-124. Also see *Qanun-i-Humayun*, p. 28 ; *Ain*, I, p. 276 ; R. & B., I, p. 121.
189. *Storia*, II, p. 331.
190. *H.N.*, (Bev.) Introduction, p. 7.
191. The inhabitants of Bilgram were reputed for their quick wit and humour ; *Ain*, II, p. 173.
192. *Qanun-i-Humayun*, p. 42.
193. Badaoni, II, p. 186 ; Tr., II, p. 189.
194. *Early Travels in India*, p. 303.
195. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 87 ; Badaoni, II, p. 385 ; Tr., II, p. 339.
196. *A.N.*, II, p. 365 ; Tr., II, p. 531.
197. *Tuzuk*, Lowe, p. 89. For a beautiful garden at Sirhind, refer to *Early Travels in India*, p. 158 ; Manrique, II, p. 182 ; R. & B., I, p. 113 ; Nurbagh at Agra, R. & B., II, p. 76 ; Bagh-i-Izzabad or Shalimar at Delhi, Thevenot, p. 49 and *Chahar Chaman*, pp. 70a, 67.
198. Thevenot, III, Chap. XXII, p. 42 ; *Ain*, II, p. 351, Monserrate, p. 31, says, "King descends to the lake (in Fatehpur Palace) on holidays and refreshes himself with its many beauties."  
 For Bagh-i-Farahbaksh at Srinagar refer to Qazwini, *Badshahnama* ; Bernier, pp. 399-400 ; Lahori, *Badshahnama*, (1866), pp. 179, 315. Also see Stuart, *Gardens of the Great Mughals, and Islamic Culture*, Jan. 1959, pp. 50-72.
199. *History of Aurangzib*, V, pp. 471-73 ; also Macauliffe, I, p. 144.
200. Grose, I, p. 146.
201. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 181.

## CHAPTER 4

# Festivals and Fairs

### Festivals

In medieval times a considerable portion of the year was set apart for public festivals. Hindu festivals exceed those of the Muslims in number and gorgeous celebrations. *Shastras* suggest only a few, *Puranas* add a large number, and tradition supplies the largest group. Most of the Hindu festivals are based on mythological, historical and astronomical considerations, while others, like *Vasant Panchami*, *Holi*, *Ganesh* and *Gaur*, etc. are observed owing to the change of seasons. *Ramnavami* and *Janmashtami* commemorate the birthday anniversaries of two of the greatest Hindu *avatars*. There was general uniformity in their observance throughout the country. But they enjoyed various degrees of popularity in different places and were celebrated with certain local modifications.

Muslim festivals, on the other hand, are few in number, but are celebrated with equal enthusiasm. As a matter of fact, they are the anniversaries of some of the most important events in the early history of Islam. The Mughals could not escape the reaction of Hindu culture. Under its dominating influence, coupled with a keen desire to bring the two communities nearer, they adopted some of the Hindu festivals and gave them a place in their court calendar. Decorations, illuminations, fireworks, splendid processions, abundant display of gold, silver, pearls, diamonds and jewels by Mohammadans in India, unheard of in their native lands, were the natural consequences of their contact with Hindu culture.

With the advent of the Mughals, a new era dawned over the social and political horizon of India. They took keen interest in the feasts and festivals of the people. Humayun adopted the *tula-dan*, i.e. the weighing ceremony of the Hindus.

Akbar went further and associated *Holi*, *Dasehra* and *Vasant* with court celebrations. Jahangir and, to a certain extent, Shah-jahan continued the noble tradition.

Aurangzeb followed a reverse course. He banned most of the Hindu and Persian festivals in the court, making them Islamic, as far as he could, in Hindu surroundings. Some of the important festivals, national as well as religious, have been dealt with in the following pages.

### Nauroz

*Nauroz*,<sup>1</sup> or the New Year's day, the greatest national festival during the Mughal times, was borrowed from the Persians.<sup>2</sup> It falls on the 1st *Farwardin*, the first month of the Persian year (20th or 21st of March) when the sun enters the sign Aries.<sup>3</sup> It marks the advent of the spring in India.<sup>4</sup> The Mughals extended the period of its celebrations to 19 days<sup>5</sup> (from the 1st *Farwardin* to 19th *Farwardin*) as against twelve in Iran. The first and the last days were considered most auspicious when "much money and numerous things are given away as presents."<sup>6</sup>

Grand preparations for the festival were made months ahead<sup>7</sup> at the imperial cities.<sup>8</sup> Bazaars, porticoes, the public and private audience halls, were profusely decorated with costly stuffs such as satin, velvet, clothes of gold,<sup>9</sup> etc. Lofty pavilions were erected and incomparable paintings drawn. The common people whitewashed their entrances and decorated the doors of their houses with green branches.<sup>10</sup> A large number of people in their best clothes<sup>11</sup> flocked from their neighbouring cities and villages to the capital to "amuse themselves by the sight of this great festival" and indulged in merry-making for full eighteen days,<sup>12</sup> visiting gardens, playing various games and attending parties.<sup>13</sup> Restrictions on gambling were relaxed for the duration of the festival<sup>14</sup> and the public was allowed free access to the presence of the king once a week during this period.<sup>15</sup>

The king and his court celebrated the greatest national festival<sup>16</sup> in a right royal manner. Special kinds of coins called *nisars* were struck by Mughal emperors from Jahangir onwards for distribution among the people or for offering tribute to the king on the occasion of certain festivities such as

New Year's day, or the anniversary of their coronations.<sup>17</sup> It is interesting to note that some of the coins issued during the period bear the images of Hindu deities. During these 19 days "wine flowed in rivulets, verse and ode flew in hundreds, gaiety and merriment ruled everything." Singers and musicians flocked to the court from all quarters, particularly from Persia.<sup>18</sup> Nautch-girls with their wonderful and attractive performances thrilled the hearts of all those present.<sup>19</sup>

Several European travellers<sup>20</sup> have given a picturesque description of the lavish display of wealth and magnificence on this occasion. Manrique, perhaps copying from somewhere or depending on hearsay, gives a detailed account of the ornamentation of the Imperial palace at Agra. The first courtyard, according to him, was "rendered gay by a large body of glittering cavalry numbering 4,000 horses, all dressed in coloured embroidered silk, while the horsemen wore brilliant silken robes, followed by 600 royal elephants with golden towers." Another hundred elephants dressed in "gay silver mounted coverings" and decorated with silken flowers and carrying silken and golden howdahs formed the second guard. The first hall was all covered with pictures and paintings of battles, riding parties, hunting-scenes, etc. The bases of the four columns of the gallery in the next hall were decorated with hollow silver pedestals in which "different sweet perfumes were burnt."<sup>21</sup> The nobles would adorn their places with jewels, pearls, diamonds, their richest treasures, and the greatest rarities so that, to quote Nizam-ud-Din, "the spectators on seeing them were filled with wonder and admiration."<sup>22</sup> Arrangements were also made where the ladies of the royal household could sit and see the celebrations in *purdah*.

The main function usually took place in the Diwan-i-Am which was "richly decorated with Gujarat and Persian gold cloth, brocaded velvet, brocades from Constantinople and China, and European curtains and screens." The king's tent, about 50 paces long and 43 paces broad,<sup>23</sup> was fixed there in the middle, having an area of about two acres around it.<sup>24</sup> This "curiously wrought"<sup>25</sup> tent "the like of which cannot be found in the world" was covered all over with *shamiyanas* of most delicately embroidered velvet, silk and cloth of gold. Pearls, jewels, diamonds, hollow fruits of gold, such as pears and

apples, pictures set in silver frames, and paintings were hung over fringes. The floor was spread over with most magnificent carpets of the richest silk. Bernier saw the pillars of such a tent overlaid with silver, "which were as thick and as high as the mast of a barque." The outside of such a tent was usually red and the inside was lined with "elegant flowery Masulipatam chintzes." A jewelled and golden throne<sup>26</sup> (and from the time of Shahjahan the famous peacock throne<sup>27</sup>) adorned this royal tent.

The rest of this vast area around the royal tent was covered all over with the tents of nobles who rivalled each other in displaying their wealth, pomp and splendour.<sup>28</sup> Sometimes the galleries around the court, walls or pillars of the halls of the public and private places, were allotted to the *amirs* for decoration at their own expense.<sup>29</sup> Hawkins writes: "The wealth and riches are wonderful that are to be seen in decking and setting forth of everyman's room or place."<sup>30</sup> The emperor was invited by each of these nobles, who after placing before him sumptuous dinner, presented him with gifts of jewels, pearls, diamonds, and other rarities.<sup>31</sup> Jahangir once visited the house of Asaf Khan at a distance of about one *kos* from the palace for a dinner. "For half the distance he had laid down under foot velvet woven with gold." His presents included jewels, gold, ornaments, cloths of delicate stuff worth about Rs. 114,000, and four horses and one camel.<sup>32</sup>

Itimad-ud-Daulah, after entertaining the king on another occasion, presented him with a throne of gold and silver worth Rs. 450,000, jewels, ornaments and cloths of the value of Rs. 100,000. Jahangir writes: "Without exaggeration from the beginning of the reign of the late king until now not one of the *amirs* has presented such offering."<sup>33</sup>

On the first and the last day of this festival the king took his seat on the throne in the midst of great rejoicing. The nobles and other great men stood in rows in order of their rank<sup>34</sup> and offered presents.<sup>35</sup> The king would then bestow *jagirs*, robes of honour, stipends, titles<sup>36</sup> and promotions in ranks. Money was distributed<sup>37</sup> and a fancy bazar held.<sup>38</sup>

### **Birthday celebrations**

The birthday<sup>39</sup> of the ruling monarch was celebrated

throughout the empire with great pomp and show. Akbar introduced the custom of observing both his lunar and solar birthdays.<sup>40</sup> There were great rejoicings in the capital for five days. Presents were offered and gifts exchanged. Special dances were arranged at the court.<sup>41</sup> Feasts were given and bonfires lighted. Poets thrilled the hearts of the assembly with poems specially composed for the occasion.<sup>42</sup> All ranks of society indulged in gambling throughout this week. The royal palace and the courts were decorated as on the occasion of the *Nauroz* festival. The elephants and horses bedecked with rich trappings and glittering robes were brought before His Majesty for review.<sup>43</sup> A good part of the day was spent in these ceremonies after which the king paid a visit to his revered mother to "receive her felicitations" on this auspicious day.<sup>44</sup> He was accompanied by all the high nobles, everyone of whom presented her with rich gifts.<sup>45</sup>

In imitation of the Hindu fashion the king was weighed against certain precious metals and commodities on this occasion.<sup>46</sup> The ceremony was performed most solemnly with prayers, and was intended to afford an opportunity of dispensing charity to the poor<sup>47</sup> to ward off the evil effects of the stars.<sup>48</sup> Humayun had the distinction of being the first Mughal emperor to adopt this custom.<sup>49</sup> Akbar observed it twice a year on his solar as well as lunar (birthday) anniversaries.<sup>50</sup> This practice was continued by Jahangir and, with slight alterations, by Shahjahan. Aurangzeb, however, reverted to the old custom of having himself weighed only once a year and even this was dispensed with in his 51st year.<sup>51</sup> But he allowed it in the case of his sons on their recovery from illness on the specific condition that the money and articles would be distributed among the poor.<sup>52</sup> On his solar birthdays, the king was weighed 12 times against different commodities such as gold, quick silver, silk, perfumes, copper, rubi, drugs, ghee, iron, rice, milk, and some kinds of grains. On lunar birthdays the king was weighed against silver, tin, cloth, lead, fruits, mustard oil, and vegetables.<sup>53</sup> The first weighing was usually against gold followed by silver and other less costly articles.<sup>54</sup> The weight was carefully noted and there was much acclamation, if the king had gained in weight.<sup>55</sup> The princes and their sons were also weighed on their solar anniversaries.<sup>56</sup> The weighing

commenced at the age of two years against one commodity, an additional one being added each year, till the number reached generally seven or eight, but in no case it was to exceed 12.<sup>57</sup>

The articles against which the king and the princes were weighed were distributed among the Brahmans, *fakirs*, and other deserving persons.<sup>58</sup> Cows, sheep, horses and goats, too, formed a part of the charity.<sup>59</sup> A large number of small animals were also set free on this occasion.<sup>60</sup> The doubts of European travellers whether such large quantities of gold and silver were actually given away to the poor<sup>61</sup> are wholly unjustified and need no consideration against authentic contemporary records.<sup>62</sup> After the ceremony the king ascended the throne in the later part of the day and received presents (from his nobles) which, according to Thevenot, were valued at millions of rupees.<sup>63</sup> The king then distributed among his courtiers newly coined rupees, and fruits such as almonds, nuts and spices made of gold and silver.<sup>64</sup> He elevated the *mansabs* of some and bestowed gifts and *jagirs*.<sup>65</sup> A sumptuous dinner or a wine-party would mark the close of the function.<sup>66</sup> The wives of the nobles as well as chief ladies of the court also attended the palace on this day and offered gifts to the queens and princesses, who in turn bestowed upon them costly *saropas* and jewels.<sup>67</sup>

Humayun introduced another festival to be held on the anniversary of the coronation of the emperor.<sup>68</sup> It was observed with great public jubilation for a week.<sup>69</sup> Soldiers and officers also took part in the celebrations.<sup>70</sup> The bazars and chief public places were decorated. Fireworks were displayed and gaudy shows held throughout the length and breadth of the empire.<sup>71</sup> Tournaments in archery were arranged and rewards given to the winners.<sup>72</sup> The nobles offered presents and received grants in the form of *jagirs*, horses, etc. Large sums of money were distributed among the poor. Aurangzeb abolished the customary rejoicings on this occasion in the 21st year of his reign<sup>73</sup> (November 1677), but otherwise continued to observe the festival.

### Mina or fancy bazars

Humayun was the first among the Mughal emperors to introduce what later came to be known as *Mina Bazar*. The first of this kind was held on boats near the king's palace after

the customary mystic feast.<sup>74</sup> Akbar, who continued the practice in a modified form, exalted such days as *khushroz* or joyful days.<sup>75</sup> Shahjahan's popular amusement was "a species of fair which was held for eight successive days in the gallery of the harem."<sup>76</sup>

No fixed interval seems to have been observed for holding such a bazar. According to Abul Fazl, it was held once a month.<sup>77</sup> Shahjahan used to hold such a bazar on the occasion of every festival.<sup>78</sup> It invariably followed the *Nauroz* celebrations.<sup>79</sup>

The stalls in the specially constructed bazar were distributed among nobles to be arranged by their wives or daughters who acted as traders.<sup>80</sup> These ladies usually were "the handsomest and most engaging wives of the *umra*."<sup>81</sup> Rajput ladies also attended the show.<sup>82</sup> The shops were usually of goldsmiths, grocers, cloth merchants, etc.<sup>83</sup> The articles exhibited were costly ornaments, silk and other fabrics.<sup>84</sup> The king with princesses and the ladies of the royal seraglio would pay visits to the bazar, and make his bargain, frequently disputing to the value of a *dam*. According to travellers, jocular expressions were exchanged—the lady at the counter would call the king a miser, or a trader quite ignorant of the price of the merchandise.<sup>85</sup> Immensely pleased, the king would not hesitate to pay double the price asked for. After the women's bazar, a bazar for men was held and merchants brought their merchandise from all parts of the world.<sup>86</sup>

### Ab-i-Pashan

A festival very similar to *Holi*, called *Ab-i-Pashan*<sup>87</sup> by Jahangir and *Id-i-Gulabi* (rose-water festival) by Lahori, was celebrated at the Mughal court with great elegance on the commencement of the rainy season. Princes and prominent nobles would take part in the festival and they greatly delighted in sprinkling rose-water over each other. It was customary to present the king with jewelled golden flasks containing rose-water, jujube-tree flower juice and the aroma of orange flowers on this festival.<sup>88</sup>

### Vasant Panchami

*Vasant Panchami*, which falls on the fifth lunar day in the



bright fortnight of *Magh*<sup>89</sup> (January-February) and marks the advent of spring,<sup>90</sup> was observed at the Mughal court. Hindus all over the country celebrated it even more enthusiastically than they do now and worshipped Sarasvati, the goddess of learning and art.<sup>91</sup>

### Holi

Holi, one of the ancient festivals of the Hindus,<sup>92</sup> was the most popular day of rejoicing, music and feast, as it is today. Colour-throwing was a lively part of the celebrations. The European travellers<sup>93</sup> who visited our country during the Mughal age describe the celebrations of this festival at great length. Their description shows that it was observed in much the same manner as it is in the 20th century.

### Rakshabandhan

*Rakshabandhan*,<sup>94</sup> the greatest festival of the Brahmans, is observed on the full moon day of *Shravana* (July-August).<sup>95</sup> *Rakhi*, called *Nighadasht* by Jahangir,<sup>96</sup> made of twisted linen rags,<sup>97</sup> or silk cord (in the case of the rich) was tied round the right wrist by one's sister. It was supposed to ward off the evil eye.<sup>98</sup> The brother who received the *rakhi* was bound to protect the life and honour of his sister. *Purohits*, or the royal priests, fastened the *rakhi* on the right wrists of their patrons.<sup>99</sup> The custom became an important institution with a moral appeal, the value of which cannot be exaggerated. When a lady sent a *rakhi* to someone, however different in caste and religion from her, he became her 'brother' with a moral obligation to stand by her in times of need.

Akbar made it a national festival and had a *rakhi* tied on his wrist.<sup>100</sup> It became a custom for the courtiers and others to adorn the emperor's wrist with beautiful strings of silk, bejewelled with rubies, pearls and gems of great value.<sup>101</sup> Jahangir during his regime revived it and ordered that the "Hindu *amirs* and the head of the caste should fasten *rakhis* on my arm."<sup>102</sup>

### Dasehra

*Vijaya Dashami*,<sup>103</sup> popularly known as *Dasehra*, considered to be of the greatest significance for the Kshatriyas,<sup>104</sup> is

observed on the 10th lunar day of *Asoj* (September-October) in commemoration of Lord Rama's victory over Ravana.<sup>105</sup> It was observed then, as now, all over the country, and theatrical shows were held to commemorate the war between Rama and Ravana. It was considered an auspicious day for undertaking a military expedition.<sup>106</sup>

*Dasehra* was also celebrated at the Mughal court. Early in the morning, all the royal elephants and horses were washed, groomed and caprisoned to be arrayed for inspection by the emperor.<sup>107</sup> Jahangir describes the festival held on the 24th of *Mehr* (1619) thus :

"After the custom of India, they decorated the horses and produced them before me. After I had seen the horses, they brought some of the elephants."<sup>108</sup>

It was the usual custom to offer presents on this festival and the king would bestow the royal favour on the deserving.

### Diwali

*Diwali* or *Dipawali*, meaning a row of lamps, is observed on the 15th day of the first half of the Hindu month of *Kartika* (October-November).<sup>109</sup> It is preceded by annual whitewashing and cleaning of the houses, so essential on sanitary grounds.<sup>110</sup> On the *Diwali* day, Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity, is worshipped after which illuminations take place. Sometimes fireworks were discharged and sweets and other presents were exchanged.<sup>111</sup> *Dipawali* in Vijayanagar, it seems, was observed to commemorate the victory which Vishnu scored against the Asuras and Narakasuras and since, as they say, it was won in the evening, there is universal illumination of houses and temples in the land.<sup>112</sup>

Gambling was considered auspicious on this occasion.<sup>113</sup> People kept awake the whole night trying their luck at dice.<sup>114</sup> Akbar was interested in the festive aspect of the celebrations, while Jahangir preferred gambling and sometimes ordered his attendants to play the games<sup>115</sup> in his presence for two or three nights.<sup>116</sup> *Goverdhan puja* followed *Diwali*. It was observed as cows' day when cattle were washed, ornamented, fed, and worshipped. Akbar also took part in the celebrations and several adorned cows were brought before him.<sup>117</sup>

Both the solar and lunar<sup>118</sup> eclipses<sup>119</sup> were observed with

all sanctity by the Hindus. They kept a strict fast 24 hours before the actual eclipse and passed the day in prayers.<sup>120</sup> A bath in the Ganges on this occasion was regarded as having special merit and large numbers resorted to Hardwar, Kashi and Prayag. Charity was bestowed on the poor and the needy.<sup>121</sup>

### Shivaratri

*Shivaratri*, or the festival of Lord Shiva, falls on the 14th day of the waning moon at the end of *Magh* (January-February) or beginning of *Phalgun* (February-March). It is observed for the atonement of one's sins and fulfilment of one's desires "during life and union with Shiva or final emancipation after death." Fasting, holding a vigil, or worshipping the *Linga* during the night are special requisites on this occasion.

It was observed with all solemnity during the Mughal times. Akbar participated in the celebration, and Jahangir also took interest in it. Abul Fazl writes : "Once a year also during the night called *Sivrat* a great meeting was held of all the *yogis* of the empire when the emperor ate and drank with the principal *yogis* who promised him that he should live three or four times as long as an ordinary man." Jahangir also refers to this festival in the *Tuzuk*.<sup>122</sup>

### Other Hindu festivals

Other important Hindu festivals were, as they are now, *Ramnavami* and *Janmashtami*. The former is the anniversary of the day of birth of Lord Rama, which falls on the 9th lunar day in the bright fortnight of the month of *Chaitra* (March-April).<sup>123</sup> The latter is the anniversary of the birthday of Lord Krishna. It is celebrated on the 8th of the dark fortnight of the month of *Bhadaun* (August-September).<sup>124</sup> Reference may be made also to the celebrations at Puri when Lord Jagannatha was brought out in his car. Huge crowds from all parts of the country attended the festival.<sup>124\*</sup>

### Muharram

The Muslim month of mourning called *Muharram*<sup>125</sup> is the anniversary of Imam Husain<sup>126</sup> whose death at Karbala is one of the most tragic events in the history of Islam. The first ten days of this month are observed as the days of lamentation by

Muslims in general and Shias in particular.<sup>127</sup> The Mughal emperors, though Sunni in belief, put no restrictions on its observance.<sup>128</sup> Monserrate gives an account of its celebration during the time of Akbar. He writes that Muslims kept fast during the first nine days of the month eating only pulse, and recited the story of Hasan and Husain from a raised platform. The audience was stirred with emotion and wept. On the tenth day they would erect funeral pyres which were burnt one after another and the glowing ashes scattered with their feet. Mandelslo gives a description of Muharram processions during Shahjahan's time. He writes : "These are carried about the city (Agra), coffins covered with bows and arrows, turbans, scimitars and garments of silk, which the people accompany with sobbings and lamentations. Some among them dance at the ceremony, others strike their swords one against another ; there are those who cut and slash themselves, so as that the blood comes out in several places, wherewith they rub their clothes and by that means represent a very strange procession. Towards night they set up several figures of men, made of straw, to personate the murderers of those saints (Hasan and Husain); and having shot a great many arrows at them, they set them on fire and reduce them to ashes."<sup>128\*</sup> Aurangzeb, however, stopped the practice of *Muharram* processions throughout his dominions. But though the *tazia* processions were never given up and *Muharram* assemblies, mourning, and distribution of charity continued to be practised all over the country, sometimes *Muharram* celebrations were marred by riots between the Sunnis and the Shias in which considerable lives were lost.<sup>129</sup>

### Id-i-Milad

*Id-i-Milad*,<sup>130</sup> or the feast of the Prophet's nativity, was celebrated on 11th of *Rabi-ul-Awwal* with great solemnity at the court. Special lectures were delivered narrating the chief incidents in the Prophet's life. A meeting of the Sayyids, scholars and saints was arranged in the palace at Agra.<sup>131</sup> That day Shahjahan, leaving the throne, took his seat on the carpet. Reciters read the holy Quran. Rose-water was profusely sprinkled and sweets and *halwa* were distributed among the people. On one occasion a sum of twelve thousand rupees was given in charity by Shahjahan.

In Gujarat and Bengal this festival was observed with great enthusiasm. The capital cities of Ahmedabad and Murshidabad were illuminated. Ulemas, Shaikhs and saints were invited to discuss *Hadis* and were presented with gold and clothes.<sup>131\*</sup>

### Shab-i-Barat

The night<sup>132</sup> of the Prophet's ascent to heaven is celebrated on the 14th of *Shabban*, the 8th Arabic month. The general belief is that on this night, the lives and fortunes of the mortals for the coming year are registered in heaven.<sup>133</sup> Muslims prepared stew, curds, sweetmeats, etc. in the name of their deceased relations on 13th *Shabban* either during the day or in the evening and offered *fatihe* over some portion of these dishes.<sup>134</sup> Sweets and presents were exchanged.<sup>135</sup> The actual festival is celebrated on the evening of the 14th.<sup>136</sup>

The Muslims, during the Mughal days, illuminated their houses and shops and displayed fireworks.<sup>137</sup> Jahangir<sup>138</sup> and Shahjahan<sup>139</sup> were very particular about this festival and observed it regularly with great pomp and show. Shahjahan was at Lahore in 1639 when *Shab-i-Barat* was celebrated during the night of 11th *Shabban* A.H. 1049. The spacious courtyard of the public audience hall was illuminated in the Persian style under Ali Mardan Khan who was in charge of the arrangements.<sup>140</sup> The palaces, Government buildings, gardens, reservoirs etc. were all illuminated. Temporary wooden structures, such as walls and domes, were raised and set with beautiful lamps.<sup>141</sup> Royal as well as private barges on the Ravi were beautifully decorated and outlined with coloured lights.<sup>142</sup> There was great display of fireworks in the court of *Diwan-i-Am* and the plain under the *jharokha-i-darshan*.<sup>143</sup> The emperor sat on the throne and distributed Rs. 10,000 among the poor as gifts out of the gold of weighing (*az zar-i-wazn*).

### Id-ul-Fitr

*Id-ul-Fitr*<sup>144</sup> or the festival of breaking the fast, also known as *Id-ul-Saghir*, or the minor feast, begins on the first day of *Shawal* and continues for two days.<sup>145</sup> This day of rejoicing comes after the long-drawn-out fast of *Ramzan*,<sup>146</sup> and is therefore particularly welcome.

absurd  
40 days not  
2 days

During the Mughal age the sight of the new moon, which preceded the *Id-ul-Fitr*, was proclaimed by firing of guns and blowing of trumpets.<sup>147</sup> On the morning of the *Id*, Muslims performed careful ablutions<sup>148</sup> after which they dressed themselves in their best clothes.<sup>149</sup> Friends and relatives exchanged dainty dishes and visits and wished each other good luck.<sup>150</sup> Then followed enjoyments, including display of fireworks. It was customary to call on elders and superiors to offer greetings.<sup>151</sup> Princes, nobles, courtiers and other high state officials<sup>152</sup> gathered in the audience hall to offer their greetings to the emperor.<sup>153</sup> In the afternoon they assembled in the *Idgah* to offer prayers.<sup>154</sup> During the first year of his reign Jahangir went to the *Idgah* to offer his thanks and prayers.<sup>155</sup> He set apart a large sum of money to be distributed among the poor and the needy. Shahjahan followed the practice of his father and on one such occasion (in 1628) gave Rs. 30,000 in charity, besides grants in land and daily allowances to the deserving.<sup>156</sup> An idea of the royal procession to the *Idgah* can be formed from the picturesque description given by Rai Chandrabhan Brahman.<sup>157</sup> Even parsimonious Aurangzeb used to celebrate this festival with great enthusiasm. In the provincial capitals the governors presided over the *Id* celebrations.<sup>158</sup>

### **Id-ul-Zuha**

*Id-ul-Zuha* or *Bakr Id*<sup>159</sup> is the feast of sacrifice held on the day or the evening of the 10th *Zu-i-Hijja*, the 12th month of the Muslim year.<sup>160</sup> The sacrifice of a quadruped, such as a goat, a sheep or even a cow perfect in all parts, made on this occasion is in commemoration of the ram which "redeemed Ismail when his father Abraham was ready to make him a sacrifice" as an offering to God.<sup>161</sup> Jahangir once sacrificed three goats with his own hand<sup>162</sup> at this festival.

The festival was observed with ceremonious display during the Mughal times. The king used to participate. Preparations were made both in the capital and in the provinces well in advance. The people assembled in large numbers in the *Idgah* at the appointed hour. The emperor would ride in procession and sometimes even take up his quarters at the *Idgah*.<sup>163</sup> The sacrifice of a camel would be performed in his presence with due ceremonials.<sup>164</sup>

In the provincial capitals the governor acted in place of the king, visited the *Idgah* with no less pomp, and sacrificed a ram or a goat with the usual rites and ceremonies.<sup>165</sup> The people who could afford it performed the same ceremony at their homes by solemnly killing a ram or a goat in memory of the ram offered for Ismail.<sup>166</sup> They also cooked stew, sweetmeats, and griddle-cakes and offered *fatihe* in the name of their deceased relatives.<sup>167</sup>

### Other Muslim festivals

Another equally important Muslim festival, namely *Bara Wafat*<sup>168</sup> was observed on the 12th of the month of *Rabi-ul-Awwal* in commemoration of the Prophet's birth and death.

Bengali Muslims celebrated another festival known as *Bera* festival. It was in honour of Prophet Ilyas or Prophet Khwaja Khizr, who is supposed to be the patron of all waters. Houses were illuminated and fireworks were displayed. The peculiar feature of this festival was the construction of mosques of paper which were set up on illuminated housetops.<sup>168\*</sup>

A few other festivals such as *Akhiri Chahar Shamba*, *Chahellum*, etc. were observed, but they were not so important or popular as the two *Ids*, *Shab-i-Barat* and *Bara Wafat*.

### Fairs

Periodical fairs were held at numerous seats of Hindu pilgrimages to which Hindu men, women and children used to throng. In medieval times, religious fairs served a double purpose—religious and social. To the devout, a visit to holy places and a dip in the holy waters were the means of attaining religious merit, but to the common man they had a social and economic significance also. In those days of slow and primitive means of communications, the fairs afforded a meeting-ground to the Hindus of all castes and provinces. They served as a means of obliterating minor local and provincial differences. They also reminded the Hindus of the essential unity of their faith and culture.

There were too many local fairs in every province, hallowed by the memory of some great personality and associated with some events in the lives of Hindu *avatars*. The most important<sup>169</sup> of these fairs were held at Hardwar, Prayag,<sup>170</sup> Mathura,

To do

Ayodhya, Gaya, Garhmukteswar, Ujjain, Dwarka, Puri, Nagarkot, and Rameshwaram. The Kumbh fairs at Prayag, Hardwar and Kurukshetra were considered particularly important and attracted lakhs of people, as they do even today.

Muslim fairs were held at Ajmer, Panipat, Nizamuddin Auliya, Sirhind, Ajodhan, etc. They, too, attracted a large number of pilgrims from every part of the country.

### NOTES

1. Badaoni (II, pp. 172, 175n, 268, 343) terms it as *Nauroz-i-Jalal-i-Jahangir*. *Tuzuk*, Lowe (pp. 39-40) calls it *Roz-i-Sharaf*. For earlier references see Alberuni, Sachau, p. 2; *B. N.*, p. 236; *Qanun-i-Humayun*, p. 69; Khwandamir, p. 95; see an article in *Oriental College Magazine*, Lahore, August 1940.
2. Its history and antiquity dates back to the days of Jamshid of "the seven-ringed cup" who is said to have fixed the Persian calendar. *Hindu-Muhammadan Feasts*, p. 110. *Alberuni's Chronology of the Ancients*, p. 199 n.
3. Badaoni, II, pp. 261-62; Tr., II, p. 269; *T.A.*, II, p. 556; *Ain*, I, pp. 276-77.
4. *Hindu-Muhammadan Feasts*, p. 110.
5. *Ain*, I, (1873). pp. 276-77.
6. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 183.
7. For travellers' accounts of the celebration of this festival during Mughal days see *Early Travels*, p. 119; Monserrate, pp. 175-76; Roe's *Embassy*, pp. 142-144; Petermundy, II, pp. 237-38; Manrique, II, pp. 195-200; Mandelslo, p. 41; *Storia*, I, p. 195; Bernier, pp. 272-73; Thevenot, III, pp. 49-50. Also see *Ain*, I, (1873), pp. 276-77; *A. N.*, III, pp. 32, 200-1, 385-86, 436; *R. & B.*, I, pp. 48-49. For painting see Ratan Tata's collection, Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.
8. Badaoni, II, p. 301; Tr., II, p. 310.
9. *R. & B.*, I, pp. 78, 130, 199, 230, 254, 294; *T. A.*, II, p. 556.
10. Manrique, II, 193.
11. Monserrate, pp. 175-76; *T.A.*, II, p. 556.



12. *Tuzuk*, Lowe, pp. 39-40. According to Monserrate, it lasted for nine days.
13. Monserrate, pp. 175-76.
14. Badaoni, II, p. 338; Tr., II, pp. 348-49. According to Thevenot, "They are so eager at it in Delhi and Banaras that there is a vast deal of money lost then and many people ruined." Thevenot, Chap. XXVX, p. 48.
15. *T.A.*, II, p. 556.
16. Even in *Dabistan* this festival is mentioned by an angel who says: "*Mah Payah* (a lunar sphere) is also one of the spheres of the Paradise in which are those who performed every kind of meritorious deeds except observing the Nauroz." *Dabistan* (1843), Trans. James Ewing, p. 289.
17. These coins weigh 43 to 44 grains. Perhaps these coins were struck on economic grounds as they were intended for distribution. Compare J. P. A. S. B., 1883 (History of Mughal Emperors of Hindustan illustrated by their Coins.)
18. *East India Factory Records* (1646-50), p. 299. For other references to Nauroz see E. F. (1624-29), p. 127 and E.F. (1651-54), pp. 244-45.
19. *T. A.*, II, p. 559.
20. Manrique, II, pp. 195-200 ; *Early Travels*, p. 119 ; Roe's *Embassy*, p. 144 ; Bernier, p. 270.
21. Manrique, II, pp. 195-200
22. *T. A.*, II, p. 556 ; Bernier, p. 270.
23. Roe's *Embassy*, p. 144. Also see Lahori, I, pp. 186-87, 191-193.
24. *Early Travels*, p. 119.
25. *Ibid.*
26. *T. A.*, II, p. 556.
27. Bernier, pp. 268-69 ; Manrique, II, pp. 200-4 ; *Storia*, II, pp. 348-49.
28. *T.A.*, II, p. 556
29. Bernier, p. 270.
30. *Early Travels*, p. 119.
31. *T.A.*, II, p. 570.
32. R. & B., I, pp. 319-20.
33. *Ibid*, II, p. 80.

34. *T.A.*, II, p. 556.
35. Thevenot, III, Chap. XXVII, p. 50.
36. For award of titles, etc. on *Nauroz* see *T.A.*, II, pp. 637-38 ; R. & B., I, p. 320.
37. Badaoni, II, p. 172 ; Tr., II, p. 175. A sum of one lakh of rupees was distributed.
38. Bernier, p. 272 (Constable Edition, 1891).
39. *Ain*, I, pp. 266-67.
40. *Ibid.*
41. Thevenot, Chap. XXVI, p. 47.
42. Badaoni, II, p. 84 ; Tr. II, p. 85.
43. Thevenot, Chap. XXVI, p. 47.
44. Manrique II pp. 200-4. See also R. & B., I, p. 78.
45. De Laet, pp. 101-2. Hawkins says that each noble presented a jewel. *Early Travels*, p. 119 ; Mandelslo, p. 42.
46. For details see *Early Travels*, p. 119 ; Roe's *Embassy*, pp. 378-80 (1926); Della Valle, p. 459; Manrique, II, pp. 200-4 ; De Laet. pp. 101-2. Mandelslo, p. 42 ; Tavernier, p. 122 ; *Storia* II, p. 348 ; Bernier, p. 272 ; Thevenot, XXVI, p. 47 and *Qanuni-i-Humayun*, p. 76 ; *Ain*, I, (1873) pp. 266-67 ; R. & B., I, pp. 78, 115, 160 ; *Badshahnama*, I, p. 243 ; *M. A.* (Urdu), p. 51.
47. Roe's *Embassy*, (1926), p. 379 ; *Ain*, I, (1873), pp. 266-67
48. R. & B., I, pp. 115-116.
49. *Qanun-i-Humayun*, p. 76.
50. *Ain*, I, (1873), pp. 266-67.
51. In March 1670, Aurangzeb forbade the festivities which used to be held on his birthday.
52. Sarkar (*History of Aurangzib*), III, pp. 85-86 ; Aurangzeb is said to have advised his grandson Muhammad Azim to get himself weighed against different metals twice a year to safeguard against spiritual ills. *Bibliography of Mughal India* by S. R. Sharma, p. 19.
53. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 266. Lahori retains gold also. (Lahori, I, pp. 243-44)
54. *Tuzuk*, Lowe, p. 64 ; Roe's *Embassy*, p. 379.
55. Ovington, p. 179 ; Tavernier, p. 122 ; Bernier, p. 270.
56. *Ain*, I, 267 f. n. Jahangir once weighed Khurram on his lunar birthday against the established custom because of

- the latter's indisposition. *Tuzuk*, Lowe, p. 96 ; R. & B., p. 115. Also see Sharma's *Bibliography*, p. 19.
57. *Ain*, I, p. 267 f.n. Occasionally the courtiers were weighed for important personal services. Jahangir had his court doctor Ruhulla weighed once against silver and the sum was given to him besides three villages. R. & B., I, p. 28. Talib Kamil was once weighed against gold by Shahjahan's orders. Lahori, I, pp. 243-44.
  58. *Ain*, I, (1873), pp. 266-67. Sometimes even courtiers got their share. Badaoni, II, p.84; Tr., II, p. 85; R. & B., I, pp. 78, 112; Lahori, I, pp. 243-44; De Laet, pp. 101-2.
  59. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 267. "According to the number of years His Majesty has lived, there is given away an equal number of sheep, goats, fowls to people that breed them." R. & B., I, p. 183.
  60. *Ain* I, (1873), p. 267.
  61. Roe, like other travellers such as Hawkins (p. 440), Mandelslo (p. 42), and Tavernier (I, p. 379), disbelieves that such large sums were given away in charity as it was seldom done publicly. Manrique rightly understands the nature of the Indians who believe that "charity which is done from the love of God should be made in secret."
  62. Badaoni, II, p. 84; Tr., II, p.85; *Ain*, I, (1873), pp. 266-67; Lahori, I, p. 243-44; *M.A.* (Urdu), pp. 21, 51, 54; *Storia*, II, p. 348.
  63. *Early Travels*, p. 119; Thevenot, XXVI, p. 47; *Storia*, II, p. 348.
  64. Thevenot, XXVI, p. 47; Roe's *Embassy* (1926), p. 379; Della Valle, p. 459; De Laet, pp. 101-2; Mandelslo, p. 42.
  65. R. & B., I, p. 78. Qutb-ud-Din Koka was promoted to a rank of 5,000 personnel and horse.
  66. *Waqyat-i-Jahangiri*, E. & D., VI, p. 356.
  67. *Storia*, II, p. 345.
  68. *Qanun-i-Humayun*, pp. 19-20. It fell into disuse after Humayun, but was not stopped. R. & B., I, pp. 1,3, 10. *History of Jahangir* by Beni Prasad, p. 136. Also see *History of Shahjahan* by Saksena, p. 246. *Maasir* (I, p. 42) refers to the practice of colour-sprinkling. For

- coronation celebrations at Vijayanagar, refer to Saletore, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 219-20.
69. Ovington, pp. 178-79. Painting No. 629, I.A.E., 2nd half of the 17th century shows Emperor Shahjahan at the time of his accession.
  70. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, pp. 305-6.
  71. Ovington, pp. 178-79.
  72. *Qanun-i-Humayun*, pp. 19-20.
  73. *History of Aurangzeb*, III, p. 87.
  74. H.N. (Bev.), p. 126. According to the author of the *Darbar-i-Akbar* (Urdu) this custom was borrowed from Turkistan where such bazars were held once or twice in a week in every village and town. But there women, as well as men, attended it to buy and sell merchandise.
  75. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 277. For conflicting views regarding the motives of holding these bazars see *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 277; Petermundy, I, p. 238; Bernier, p. 273.
  76. *Storia*, I, p. 195.
  77. *Ain* I, (1873), p. 277.
  78. Bernier, p. 273.
  79. *Ibid*, p. 272.
  80. Petermundy, II, p. 238.
  81. Bernier, p. 273.
  82. Tod, I, pp. 401-2 ; Petermundy, II, p. 238.
  83. Bernier, pp. 272-73.
  84. Petermundy, II, p. 238. If we are to believe Badaoni, stalls in the fancy bazar were sometimes conducted by nobles themselves. He mentions one Shah Fatehullah who in his stall "exhibited all sorts of skill such as the dragging about of weights and other storage contrivances." Badaoni, II. p. 322; Tr., II, p. 331.
  85. Thevenot, III, Chap. XXVIII, p. 50.
  86. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 277.
  87. Persian festival in memory of the rain which fell on the 13th of the Persian month of *Tir* and put an end to the famine. (Bahar-i-Ajam). R. & B., I, pp. 265, 295. A very illustrative painting No. 636, I. A. E., Mughal, early 17th century shows "The Emperor Jahangir celebrating the festival of *Aab-Pashi* or the sprinkling of rose-water," painted by Govardhan on the 5th *Amardad* Day. Flasks

- full of rose-water, white, yellow and blue are before Jahanngir while around him stand courtiers and some ladies.
88. Lahori, I, p. 204; *Amal-i-Salih*, p. 374; R. & B., I, pp. 265-295.
  89. *Ain*, III, pp. 317-21.
  90. *Hindu Holidays*, p. 238.
  91. On this day pens, ink and books are revered and in Bengal *Sarasvati puja* is observed. Flowers and prayers are offered for the boon of knowledge, temporal and spiritual. See Malik Muhammad Jayasi's *Granthavali* (Hindi) by Ramchandra Shukla, pp. 90-92. See a painting *Raga Vasanta* Rajasthani, 1700 A.D., numbered 400, I.A.E. Also see *Hindu-Muhammadan Feasts*, p. 77.
  92. *Ain*, III, p. 321; *Ain*, II, p. 173; R. & B., I, pp. 245-46; *Faiths, Fairs and Festivals*, pp. 85-86; *Hindu Holidays*, p. 88; *Hindu-Muhammadan Feasts*, p. 38; Crooke's *Popular Religion*, II, pp. 313-22; *Punjab Notes and Queries*, III, No. 553.
  93. Monserrate, p. 22; Petermundy, II, p. 292; *English Factories* (1624-29), p. 246; (1634-36), p. 136; (1637-44), p. 13; Mandeslo, 58; *Storia*, II, p. 154; Thevenot, Chap. XXXI, pp. 57-58; Hamilton, I, pp. 128-29; Della Valle, I, pp. 122-23. For a Holi scene see Painting No. 482, Kangra, 18th century. Also see *History of Aurangzib*, III, p. 91. In the time of the later Mughals, some Muslim grandees like Khanjahan Bahadur Kotaltash took lively interest in its celebrations and Bhim Sen, the author of *Nuskha-i-Dilkusha*, refers to the two sons of the Khan, Mir Ahsan and Mir Mushin, who "were more forward than Rajputs themselves." *Nuskha-i-Dilkhusa* by Bhim Sen, p. 64.
  94. *Raksha*—literally protection, and *Bandhan*—tying.
  95. *Ain*, III, pp. 317-21; *Hindu Holidays*, p. 178.
  96. R. & B., I, p. 224.
  97. Badaoni, II, p. 361; Tr., II, p. 269.
  98. *Hindu Holidays*, p. 178. Also see *Hindu-Muhammadan Feasts*, p. 65.
  99. *Ain*, III, pp. 317-21; R. & B., I, p. 244.
  100. Badaoni, II, pp. 261-62; Tr., II, p. 269.

101. *Ain*, III, p. 319 ; R. & B., I, p. 246.
102. R. & B., I, p. 246.
103. Victory 10th day. For *Mahanavami* festival and *Vijaya Dashami* celebrations at Vijayanagar refer to E. & D., IV, pp. 117-18 ; Saletore, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 372-80.
104. *Ain*, III, p. 319.
105. For Durga *pūja* in temple see R. & B., I, pp. 224-25.
106. R. & B., I, p. 245 ; II, pp. 100-1 ; For the Rajput celebration of the festival see *Ain*, III, pp. 317-21.
107. R. & B., II, p. 176. This custom still prevails in some states. See *Hindu Holidays*, pp. 185-88.
108. R. & B., II, pp. 100-1 ; R. & B., I, p. 245. See also *Alamgirnama*, p. 914.
109. For general description see *Hindu-Muhammadan Feasts*, p. 18 ; *South Indian Festivities*, p. 152 ; *Hindu Holidays*, p. 42. For contemporary evidence see *Bengal in the 16th Century*, pp. 186-86 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 309 ; Petermundy, II, p. 146 ; *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 216 ; III, pp. 305-7 ; R. & B., I, p. 246. For earlier reference see Alberuni's *India*, II, p. 182.
110. *Faiths, Fairs and Festivals*, p. 106.
111. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 309. Hindus would open fresh accounts on this day. R. & B., I, p. 246.
112. *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Vol. XXVI, 1945. For some more details of the festival, see Major, *India*, p. 28.
113. *Ain*, I, p. 321 ; for earlier reference see Alberuni's *India*, II, p. 182.
114. R. & B., I, p. 246.
115. *Ibid*, p. 268.
116. *Ibid*. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, pp. 185-86. Shahjahan did not take any interest in these festivities. K.R. Qanungo, *Historical Essays*, p. 67.
117. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 216. During the time of the later Mughals (1738 A.D.), it appears, the permission of the Governor was necessary to hold the *Diwali* fair, for which a poll-tax was asked sometimes. (Macauliffe, Introduction, pp. lxxi-lxxvi).
118. Bernier (1891), pp. 301-3 describes in detail the ceremonies

- performed by the Hindus on the occasion of an eclipse at Delhi in 1666 A.D.
119. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 308 ; *Hindu-Muhammadian Feasts*, pp. 28-30.
  120. *Ibid.*
  121. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 308 ; Badaoni, II, p. 95 ; Tr., II, pp. 94-95. Jahangir used to get himself weighed on solar and lunar eclipses and distributed money among the poor. R. & B., I, pp. 160, 183, 281.
  122. R. & B., I, p. 361 ; also see *Ain*, I, p. 210 ; Saletore, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 404-5.
  123. *Ain*, III, (Sarkar), p. 350 ; *Hindu Holidays*, p. 194 ; *Hindu-Muhammadian Feasts*, p. 67.
  124. *Ain*, III, (Sarkar), p. 352 ; *Hindu Holidays*, pp. 95-96 ; *Hindu-Muhammadian Feasts*, p. 41.
  - 124\*. For the festival of Jagannath refer to Kennedy, *The Chaitanya Movement*, p. 43 ; Saletore, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 383-89 ; Ashraf, K.M., *Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan*, p. 204 ; *Orissa Historical Society Research Journal*, July 1951.
  125. For general account see *Islami Teohar aur Utsav*, p. 40 ; Crooke's *Islam*, pp. 159-61 ; *Hindu-Muhammadian Feasts*, pp. 106-9 ; *Outlines of Islamic Culture*, p. 717. For contemporary description see Monserrate, p. 22 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 307 ; Pelsaert's *India*, p. 75 ; Petermundry, II, p. 219 ; Mandelslo, p. 42 ; Van Twist's "Description of India," *J.I.H.*, April 1937, pp. 70-71. Also see Badaoni, I, p. 481 ; Tr., I, p. 623 ; K. K., II, p. 214 and *History of Aurangzib*, III, p. 91 ; Norris, *Embassy to Aurangzeb*, pp. 165-66.
  126. The son of Ali and grandson of the Holy Prophet. He died fighting at Karbala against Yazid, the son of the usurper Moavia to the khalifaship of Islam. *Outlines of Islamic Culture*, p. 717.
  127. *Hindu-Muhammadian Feasts*, p. 106.
  128. Humayun had Shia tendencies, but remained a Sunni. Rulers of the Deccan, as Bahamanis, Adil Shahis, Nizam Shahis, Qutab Shahis, etc. belonged to Shia sect. Nur-jahan's relatives were Shias. Naturally they influenced

- the Mughal rulers and, consequently, no bar was imposed on the celebrations of *Muharram*. *Islami Teohar*, p. 40.
- 128\*. Mandelslo, p. 42.
129. A similar riot occurred at Burhanpur in 1669 in which 50 persons were killed and 100 injured. Khafi Khan, II, p. 214 ; *History of Aurangzib*, III, p. 91.
130. Lahori, I, A, pp. 230-31 ; *Amal-i-Salih* (I, p. 617) mentions 20,000 to have been given in charity.
131. Akbar held every year a Majlis-i-Urs on this occasion and people were entertained. *T.A.*, Trans., II, p. 520.
- 131\*. Rahim, A., *Social and Cultural History of Bengal*, op. cit. pp. 276-77.
132. Lahori calls it *Lailat-ul-Barat*. For general account see *Hindu-Muhammadan Feasts*, pp. 111-12 ; *Faiths, Fairs and Festivals*, pp. 199-200 ; *Islami Teohar*, pp. 68-72 ; Crooke's *Islam*, pp. 203-4. For contemporary accounts see Mandelslo, p. 46 ; Thevenot, III, p. 31. Also see R. & B., II, pp. 22, 94, and Lahori, II, pp. 167-168.
133. *Islami Teohar*, pp. 68-72.
134. Crooke's *Islam*, pp. 203-4. *Islami Teohar*, pp. 68-72.
135. Thevenot, III, p. 31, wrongly calls this festival the feast of *Choubert*.
136. Crooke's *Islam*, pp. 203-4.
137. Thevenot, III, p. 31. Mandelslo, p. 46.
138. R. & B., II, pp. 22, 94.
139. Lahori, II, pp. 167-68.
140. Lahori, II, pp. 167-68.
141. *Ibid.*
142. *Ibid.* *Amal-i-Salih*, pp. 285-86.
143. Lahori, II, pp. 167-68.
144. For general account see *Faiths, Fairs and Festivals of India*, p. 201 ; *Hindu-Muhammadan Feasts*, p. 102 ; *Islami Teohar*, pp. 72-78 ; Herklots' *Islam*, pp. 211-13. *Outlines of Islamic Culture*, p. 704. For contemporary evidence see Roe's *Embassy*, p. 72 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 306 ; Pelsaert's *India*, p. 73 ; Della Valle, p. 428 ; Bernier (1914), p. 280 ; Ovington, p. 243 and *Letters received by East India Company*, Vol. IV, p. 10. Also see *B.N.*, pp. 235-36, 311, 410, 584, 683 and 689 :



- Certainly a false author* 145. *T.A.*, II, p. 605 ; *Tuzuk*, Lowe, p. 37 ; Lahori, I, p. 259 and *M.A.* (Urdu), p. 28.
145. *Islami Teohar*, pp. 72-78. Crooke's *Islam*, pp. 211-14. *Outlines of Islamic Culture*, p. 704.
146. Ovington, p. 243 ; *Storia*, I, pp. 158-59. See also *Letters received by East India Company*, Vol. IV, p. 10. In the *Akhbarat* of the reign of Aurangzeb, there are stray references to the fact that Hindu officers sometimes invited Muslim friends to break their fast at their residences.
147. Roe's *Embassy*, p. 72. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, pp. 305-6. According to Della Valle, "They set lamps on the tops of their houses and on all other most conspicuous places near their great tanks that are surrounded with buildings where those lights are doubled by reflection upon the water." Della Valle, p. 428 ; Norris, p. 145.
148. *B.N.*, pp. 235-36. On another place Babar says: "*Ramzan* was spent this year with ablution and *tarawih* in the garden of eight paradises." *T.A.*, II, p. 605.
149. Pelsaert's *India*, p. 73.
150. *Ibid.*
151. Norris, *Embassy to Aurangzeb* (1699-1702), p. 144. Also see William Foster, *The Voyage of Nicholas Downton to East Indies*, London, 1939, p. 144.
152. *M.A.* (Urdu), p. 28.
153. Lahori, I, p. 259 ; *Tuzuk*, Lowe, p. 37.
154. Here in the *Idgah* some selected parts of the Holy Quran are "publicly read unto them" (Della Valle, p. 429) by the Imam. (*Hindu-Muhammadan Feasts*, p. 102.)
155. *Tuzuk*, Lowe, p. 37.
156. This is the amount distributed during *Ramzan* and the *Id*. Lahori, I, p. 259.
157. See *Chahar Chaman* for details.
158. For Aurangzeb see *M.A.* (Urdu), p. 28. For celebration in the provinces and cities see Roe's *Embassy*, p. 72 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 306.
159. For general account see *Islami Teohar*, pp. 78-88 ; Crooke's *Islam*, p. 214 ; *Faiths, Fairs and Festivals*, p. 201 ; *Observations on the Mussulmans of India*, I, p. 259 ; *Hindu-*

- Muhammadan Feasts*, pp. 102-3. For contemporary evidence refer to *Early Travels in India*, p. 318 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 306 ; Petermundy, II, p. 196 ; *Storia*, II, pp. 349-350. Also see *A.N.*, II, p. 31 ; *Tr.*, II, p. 51 ; *R. & B.*, I, p. 189.
160. Crooke's *Islam*, p. 214. *Faiths, Fairs and Festivals*, p. 201 ; *Observations on the Mussulmans of India*, I, p. 259 ; *Hindu-Muhammadan Feasts*, pp. 102-3.
161. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 306.
162. *R. & B.*, I, 189 ; Petermundy, II, p. 196.
163. *A.N.*, II, p. 31 ; *Tr.*, II, p. 51.
164. *Storia*, II, pp. 349-50 ; *Badshahnama*, I, pp. 226, 430 ; II, pp. 95, 191, 283, 332, etc.
165. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 306.
166. Terry in *Early Travels in India*, p. 318.
167. Crooke's *Islam*, pp. 214.
168. *Barah* means twelve and *wafat* means death. (*Hindu-Muhammadan Feasts*, p. 98). In private houses and mosques meetings are held at which the story of the birth, miracles and death of the Prophet is recited. *Ibid*, p. 98.
- 168\*. Sen, K.P., *Bangalar Itihas*, p. 71.
169. *Ain*, III, (Sarkar), pp. 332-36.
170. Manrique, II, p. 146.

## CHAPTER 5

# Position of Women in Society

### The purdah system

Woman held an honoured position in the Vedic age, and was quite competent to take part in every aspect of the social, intellectual and spiritual life of the race.<sup>1</sup> During the period that followed the Vedic age there was gradual deterioration of her position, but she still retained a large measure of freedom in the disposal of her own person and fortune.<sup>2</sup> As a girl, she was under the guardianship of her father, as wife under her husband, and as a widow under the care of her son.

Nowhere in all these periods is there a definite suggestion of the existence of any seclusion of women or of child marriage. With the advent of Islam new social forces appeared on the Indian horizon. It is true that polygamy was not unknown to the ruling classes of the Hindu population before the advent of Muslims, but this received great encouragement owing to the impact of Muslim ideas. Strict veiling of women was the common practice among the Muhammadans. The adoption of the latter custom by the Hindu women under the stress of the circumstances brought about their social, political and intellectual stagnation. Their position as girls, wives and widows was reduced to that of dependents and subordinates.

The *purdah* system in all probability was unknown in ancient India.<sup>4</sup> Mazumdar<sup>5</sup> and Rashid<sup>6</sup> in their recently published works have not been able to cite even isolated instances of its prevalence in ancient India. Its general adoption, according to Dr. Altekar, is subsequent to the advent of Muslim rule in India.<sup>7</sup> *Purdah* was strictly observed in their native lands. Naturally in a foreign country like India greater stress was laid upon it. Even a liberal king like Akbar had to issue orders that

"If a young woman was found running about the streets and bazars of the town and while so doing did not veil herself or allowed herself to become unveiled...she was to go to the quarters of the prostitutes and take up the profession."<sup>9</sup>

Hindus adopted *purdah* as a protective measure<sup>10</sup> to save the honour of their womenfolk and to maintain the purity of their social order.<sup>11</sup> The tendency to imitate the ruling class was another factor which operated in favour of introducing *purdah* among Hindu families.

*Purdah* was strictly observed among high-class families of both the communities during the Mughal period.<sup>12</sup> It was prevalent in Bengal and U.P. among rich Hindu families, as has been noted by Jayasi,<sup>13</sup> Chaitanya and Vidyapati. Seclusion came to be regarded as a sign of respect and nobility. Wives of nobles lived in spacious houses surrounded by high walls with tanks, gardens and other luxuries inside.<sup>14</sup> Eunuchs were frequently employed as the medium of communication between the male and female members of a royal or noble family.<sup>15</sup> Ovington writes : "All the women of fashion in India are closely preserved by their husbands who forbid them the very sight of strangers."<sup>16</sup> Even male doctors were not allowed to face the ailing ladies of noble and princely families. A curious method was adopted for diagnosing the disease without seeing the patient's face or feeling her pulse. A handkerchief was rubbed all over the body of the patient and then put into a jar of water. By its smell the doctor judged the cause of illness and prescribed the medicine.<sup>17</sup>

Ladies of high families thought it improper to move out without aristocratic veils.<sup>18</sup> Della Valle writes : "For these (Muslim ladies) unless they be dishonest or poor never come abroad."<sup>19</sup> They thought it derogatory to stir out except on special occasions and even then in closely covered palanquins surrounded on all sides by servants and eunuchs.<sup>20</sup> Princesses would go out rarely and that, too, only with the previous permission of the king. They went out usually in the morning in palanquins accompanied by slaves. At the entrance of the residence, palanquin-carriers would be replaced by females to carry them further inside.<sup>21</sup> When a princess desired to ride an elephant, the animal was made to enter a tent near the palace-

gate and the mahout covered his face with a cloth so that he might not see the princess when she entered the covered *hawdah*.<sup>22</sup> None dared to pass on the road when the royal ladies went out in a procession. Bernier rightly observes : "It is indeed a proverbial observation in these armies that three things are to be carefully avoided, the first getting among the choice and led horses where kicking abounds, the second on the hunting-ground, the third a too near approach to the ladies of the seraglio."<sup>23</sup> If for any reason a Muslim lady of rank discarded *pardah* even for a temporary period, the consequences for her were disastrous. Amir Khan, the governor of Kabul, felt no scruple in renouncing his wife when her *pardah* was broken in an attempt to save her life by leaping from the back of the elephant who had run amuck.<sup>24</sup>

Nurjahan was a noble exception. Beni Prasad writes : "She broke the *pardah* convention and did not mind to come out in public." *Pardah* was gradually spreading in Rajputana, but it was less vigorously observed in Rajput families, where the ladies, trained in all the arts of warfare, would frequently take part in hunting parties and other expeditions. Barring notable Muslim families there, South Indians did not adopt *pardah*. In Malabar, wives welcomed guests and talked familiarly with them.<sup>25</sup>

*Pardah* was no less strictly observed among middle-class Muslim ladies who dared not move out of doors without a veil,<sup>26</sup> which consisted of a *burqa* or a *chadar* and hid her from top to toe. She was thus able to see others through the thin layer of a net, but could not be seen by them.<sup>27</sup> Hamilton writes : "The Muhammadan women always go veiled when they appear abroad."<sup>28</sup> Muslims, according to Ovington<sup>29</sup> and Dr. Fryer,<sup>30</sup> were very jealous of their wives. Even the meanest among them would not allow his wife to stir out uncovered. Those among them who could afford it, went out in palanquins and coaches covered on all sides.<sup>31</sup> If we are to believe Della Valle, the Muslims would not allow their wives to talk even to their relatives, except in their presence.<sup>32</sup>

#### **No *pardah* for common women**

No such coercive *pardah* system seems to have been observed among the Hindu middle class and certainly not

among the Hindu masses. Hindu ladies could move out of doors with little or no restriction.<sup>33</sup> Della Valle writes :

“Hindus take one wife and of her they are not so fearful and jealous as the Muhammadans are of their several wives and women, for they suffer their wives to go abroad whither they please.”<sup>34</sup>

Both the sexes had sufficient liberty to go out and enjoy the open air.<sup>35</sup> It was the usual custom for husbands or some other male relations to accompany women when going out of doors.<sup>36</sup> Unlike Muslim women they did not cover themselves from head to foot.<sup>37</sup> It was enough to have a sheet or *dopatta* to cover their heads.

Women of the lower stratum of our society, such as peasant and working classes, were entirely free from the bondage of *purdah*.<sup>38</sup> They were expected to help their husbands in all “external pursuits and internal economy.”<sup>39</sup> They used to take their bath publicly at river-sides<sup>40</sup> and would visit shrines travelling on foot without any restriction whatsoever. It was everywhere a common sight to see women water-carriers walking along the streets without any *purdah*.<sup>41</sup>

### Unwelcome daughters

The birth of a daughter was considered inauspicious. The very silence with which a female child was received was indicative of disappointment.<sup>42</sup> She was not as welcome as a boy. Even in the royal family the difference was clear and well-marked. Only women rejoiced and feasted on the birth of a daughter, while the whole court took part in the celebrations if a prince was born.<sup>43</sup> We can well understand the anxiety of Akbar who had “resolved within himself that if Almighty God should bestow a son on him, he would go on foot from Agra to Shaikh Muin-ud-Din Chishti’s mausoleum, a distance of about 140 *kos*.”<sup>44</sup>

A wife who unfortunately happened to give birth to girls in succession was despised and even sometimes divorced.<sup>45</sup> The deplorable custom of infanticide was luckily confined only to a very minor section of the less cultured Rajput families.<sup>46</sup> The scarcity of suitable matches due to the prohibition of inter-marriage between families of the same clan and continuous wars and feuds with the remote tribes, together with the

sentiment that an unworthy match lowers the prestige of a bride's father, led them to resort to this practice.<sup>47</sup>

### Polygamy among rich Muslims

The Quran, no doubt, permits a Muslim to marry four wives<sup>48</sup> at a time, but monogamy seems to have been the rule among the lower stratum of society in both the communities during the Mughal period.<sup>49</sup> In spite of the decision of the *ulema* in the *Ibadat Khana* that a man might marry any number of wives by *mutah* but only four by *nikah*,<sup>50</sup> Akbar had issued definite orders that a man of ordinary means should not possess more than one wife unless the first proved to be barren.<sup>51</sup> He considered it highly injurious to a man's health to keep more than one wife.<sup>52</sup> Polygamy was the privilege of the rich Muslims, each of whom kept three or four wives at a time. Mirza Aziz Koka's well-known proverb deserves mention. He used to say that "a man should marry four wives—a Persian to have somebody to talk to, a Khurasani for his housework, a Hindu woman for nursing his children, and a woman of Mavarunnahr to have someone to whip as a warning for the other three."<sup>53</sup> The co-wives rivalled each other and used all devices to excel one another and thereby win the love of their husband.<sup>54</sup> Each of them received fixed monthly allowances in addition to clothes, jewellery, and other household necessities. Polygamy naturally brought many evils in its train.<sup>55</sup> A single husband could hardly be expected to satisfy his several wives who wore the most expensive clothes, ate the daintiest food and enjoyed all worldly pleasures.<sup>56</sup> Domestic unhappiness and immorality, in some cases at least, was the natural consequence.

### Hindus monogamous

Hindus, with the exception of a small number of princes<sup>57</sup> and very wealthy persons, strictly restricted themselves to monogamy as enjoined by their social custom. Della Valle writes: "Hindus take but one wife and never divorce her till death, except for the cause of adultery."<sup>58</sup> Mandelslo,<sup>59</sup> Hamilton,<sup>60</sup> Orme<sup>61</sup> and Stavorinus<sup>62</sup> corroborate it. In the extreme case if a wife proved to be barren, they had the liberty to marry another with the consent of the Brahmins.<sup>63</sup>

**Child marriage**

As a general rule, a girl of either community was brought up under close parental supervision.<sup>64</sup> Higher education was denied to middle-class and ordinary ladies, and learning was restricted to primary subjects. Their training was confined to home and domestic affairs, such as needlework, embroidery, dressing the victuals, cooking,<sup>65</sup> etc. Life-long celibacy for girls was discouraged and every girl had to be given away in marriage. On account of this and political and socio-religious circumstances of the time, parents tried to marry off their daughters as early as possible. The custom in those days did not allow girls to remain in their parents' home for more than six to eight years after their birth. They were married even before the age of puberty—usually when six or seven years old.<sup>66</sup> One of the Brahman generals of the Peshwa was filled with great anxiety because his daughter's marriage could not be arranged at the age of nine. "If the marriage is postponed to the next year," he wrote from the battlefield, "the bride will be as old as ten. It will be a veritable calamity and scandal."<sup>67</sup> A father, according to Mukundram, "who could get his daughter married in her ninth year was considered lucky and worthy of the favours of God."<sup>68</sup>

The rigidity of the custom, coupled with the celebration of the marriage at a very tender age, left no room whatsoever for either the bride or the bridegroom to have time to think of a mate of her or his own choice. The custom left it solely to the discretion of parents, or of the nearest relatives and friends to arrange the match.<sup>69</sup> Seldom was there a wish expressed by any female relation of the bridegroom to see the bride before the marriage.<sup>70</sup> As for Muslims, it was contrary to their acknowledged custom.<sup>71</sup> The marriage had to be settled on hearsay reports with an advantage to the bride's parents who had an opportunity to see the boy and satisfy themselves about him, if they so desired. Dowry was demanded, and sometimes parents disregarded the suitability of the match<sup>72</sup> and cared primarily for a rich dowry. It seems that the "evils of the dowry system prevailed with greater vigour in Bengal. There was also a curious custom of giving away a younger sister of the bride to the bridegroom as a part of the dowry."<sup>72\*</sup> In some castes and localities the bridegroom had to pay money to the



bride's guardians.<sup>73</sup>

Money played an important part when a marriage was arranged between persons of unequal ages<sup>74</sup> or social status. Sometimes for the sake of wealth a young man would marry a woman older than himself. The evil grew so much that Akbar issued orders that if a woman "happened to be older by twelve years than her husband, the marriage should be considered as illegal and annulled."<sup>75</sup> In some cases betrothals were fixed, as we see even today, among the rural folk before the actual birth of their children, if "death or sex disapproves not."<sup>76</sup> Akbar tried in vain to bring home to his people that the consent of the bride and the bridegroom as well as permission of the parents was essential before the confirmation of the engagement.<sup>77</sup>

There seems to have been greater liberty for girls belonging to high-class Rajput families to choose their husbands. The princess of Rupnagar, charmed with the gallantry of Rana Raj Singh of Mewar, invited him "to bear her from the impending union with the Moghul Emperor Aurangzeb." Sometimes a romantic lady would fix the price of her hand. Tarabai, the daughter of Rao Surthan, promised to marry the youth who would recover her<sup>78</sup> father's domain Todah from the Pathans. Jaimal, the brother of Prithvi Raj, won her.<sup>79</sup> Karamdevi, the beautiful daughter of the Mohil chieftain, took the risk of renouncing her betrothal with the heir of the Rao of Mandor and chose to be the bride of Sadhu, heir of Pugal, whose admiration she had won. Tod writes: "The passion of the daughter of the Mohil was fostered at the risk of the destruction not only of her father's house but also that of her lover." The returning bridal party was attacked by the slighted heir of Mandor and the brave Sadhu was slain, and Karamdevi, "at once a virgin, a wife and a widow" followed her lover and became *sati*.<sup>80</sup>

### As a wife

As already narrated, the ordinary Indian girl had no choice in the selection of her husband. When married, the mother-in-law would exercise control over her and her commands must be carried out. If she failed to come up to her standard, she might be divorced in a Muslim family, and her life would become miserable in a Hindu home. Her position was no better

than that of an ordinary maid. She had to please each and every member of her husband's family by rendering every possible domestic service. She would perform all the household duties—dusting, sweeping, and washing the floor and cleaning cooking-pots and utensils. She had to look after cows and other domestic animals, besides supervising the other work entrusted to her. But when grown up and away from the dominating influence of her mother-in-law, a middle-class lady had large powers in the management of the household. She would control its expenditure and supervise the general arrangement of the kitchen and furniture and perform periodical religious and secular functions.<sup>81</sup> She had to prove herself a devoted wife who would not take meals until her husband had dined.<sup>82</sup> When in childbed she had enforced rest, and retired to a separate room during her periods.

Bartolomeo notices with appreciation the great respect paid to a pregnant woman; not only her husband and relations, but all the inhabitants of the place belonging to her caste prayed for her health and safety.<sup>83</sup> But for a certain number of days after delivery she was not considered fit to be touched by anyone except the midwife who attended to her needs. Her food, according to Manucci, would be left at a distance and none would approach her lest he or she should be defiled.<sup>84</sup>

The position of a woman with regard to her husband was that of a dependent,<sup>85</sup> in honourable subordination, at least as long as mutual relations remained cordial. Jahangir writes in the *Tuzuk* :

"It is a maxim of Hindus that no good deed can be performed by men in the social state without the partnership or presence of the wife whom they have styled the half of man."<sup>86</sup>

Both would give way to accommodate each other to prevent their domestic happiness from being marred. Her counsels carried weight, especially when she had become a mother. But still the last word was that of her husband. Even "the daughter of a hundred kings" who had contemptuously refused to fetch a glass of water for her lord and thus become a "cup-bearer to the chieftain of Sadri" had to be reminded by her father, the Rana of Mewar, of her position as a wife with respect to her husband, the Chief of Sadri. The heir-apparent of Mewar

stood at the edge of the carpet spread in the darbar hall "performing the menial office of holding the slippers of the chief,"<sup>87</sup> who had been invited to the court by his sovereign. Tod writes: "Shocked at such a mark of respect, he stammered forth some words of homage, his unworthiness, etc." To this the Rana replied: "As my son-in-law no distinction too great can be conferred. Take home your wife; she will never again refuse you a cup of water."<sup>88</sup>

Some of the husbands, however, it is to be regretted, treated their wives very harshly. Such men, however, suffered from some mental defect, such was Khwaja Muazzam, the maternal uncle of Akbar.<sup>89</sup>

But with all this, the ladies belonging to high and respectable old families, especially Rajputanis, were reluctant to compromise when their self-respect was at stake. Raja Jai Singh of Amber once cut a joke with his wife, the princess of Haraoti, about the simplicity of her dress. He began playfully to "contrast the sweeping jupe of Kotah with the more scanty robe of the belles of his own capital, and taking up a pair of scissors said he would reduce it to an equality with the latter." Greatly annoyed, she spoke in words which clearly bring forth the true sex relations prevalent among high Rajput families. "Mutual respect is the guardian not only of happiness but of virtue," and if again she was insulted, he would find that "the daughter of Kotah could use a sword more effectively than the prince of Amber the scissors."<sup>90</sup> Bernier rightly remarks that many girls would have led a happy married life if their parents had connected them with a family less noble than their own.<sup>91</sup> Hamida Banu's attitude in this respect is admirable. She declined to enter into a matrimonial alliance with a monarch, exclaiming: "I would rather marry a man whose lapel I can hold than one whose pedestal I cannot reach."<sup>92</sup> Rajputanis had the courage even to admonish their husbands, when they went astray from the path of duty. When Jaswant Singh, the king of Marwar, retreated after fighting the deadly battle of Dharmat with Aurangzeb, his wife, according to Ferishta, "disdained to receive him and shut the gates of the castle." She cried out that he could not be her husband, "the son-in-law of the Rana cannot possess a soul so abject. I am deceived, my husband is certainly killed. It cannot be otherwise."<sup>93</sup>

Whatever might have been the respective positions of wife and husband, it is a fact beyond dispute that most of the Hindus managed to lead a happy domestic life. The woman adored her husband with passionate reverence and in return her husband rendered her all tenderness and protection. As a natural consequence, the true love and affection of the husband for his wife was unailing. He would stick to monogamy and seldom fall a victim to adultery.<sup>94</sup> Tavernier rightly observes : "Banias (Hindus) when married are seldom untrue to their wives."<sup>95</sup> He would address her as "O thou mother of our son, I desire not paradise itself, if thou art not satisfied with me." Vulgar equality had no meaning. It was a love reciprocated. The result was a happy conjugal life in most cases.<sup>96</sup>

#### As a widow

Divorce<sup>97</sup> and remarriages, common among Muslims, were prohibited to Hindu women. The Hindu husband could remarry<sup>98</sup> in certain circumstances, as on the death of his wife or if she proved to be barren.<sup>99</sup> But a Hindu woman had no such privilege. Dr. Altekar rightly observes : "No divorce was allowed, even if the husband was a moral wreck or he grievously ill-treated his wife."<sup>100</sup> Even when the husband died, the woman had no choice even if she desired to remarry. "Nor could she find any of her own race who would take her, because she would be accounted as bad, as infamous in desiring a second marriage."<sup>101</sup>

Widow remarriage except for the lower-caste people had disappeared almost completely in Hindu society during the medieval age.<sup>102</sup> This custom suffered little change during the Mughal days and was even more rigorously enforced. Hindu ladies, according to Ovington, disliked and abhorred the very idea of remarrying and preferred to maintain their fidelity even after the death of their husbands.<sup>103</sup> Seldom did a woman desire to outlive her husband unless she was big with a child. *Sati* was a prevalent practice, in spite of the efforts of the Mughals to check it.<sup>104</sup> Linked as they used to be from their infancy, separation was intolerable.<sup>105</sup> In *sati* they saw hidden the symbolic meaning, the deep passionate joy of the sacrifice and the expression of love stronger than death. Even the betrothed girls had to commit *sati* on the funeral pyre of their

would-be husbands.<sup>106</sup>

Far from being well disposed towards them, society treated very unfairly those widows who would not burn themselves with their dead husbands. Society looked down upon them.<sup>107</sup> They were not allowed to wear their hair long or to put on ornaments.<sup>108</sup> Widowhood was considered a punishment for the sins of one's previous life.<sup>109</sup> These unfortunate creatures had to put up with their parents, who treated them no better than ordinary maids, doing all the menial jobs in the house, hated and despised even by their "family and caste as being afraid of death."<sup>110</sup> The very few who desired to remarry disregarding the custom were turned out of their caste and community and finding it impossible to find a husband in their own community had "recourse to Christians and Muhammadans."<sup>111</sup> Widow remarriage was allowed by Muhammadan law and was practised by the rich and the poor alike. However, it seems that many widows, particularly those belonging to respectable families, preferred not to marry again due to the impact of Hindu ideas.<sup>111\*</sup>

### As a mother

Whatever might have been the position of a woman as a girl, bride and widow, she certainly occupied a most respectable position in society as a mother. Manu emphatically asserts that a mother "is more to be revered than a thousand fathers."<sup>112</sup> Apastamba writes: "Women as mothers are the best and the foremost preceptors of children."<sup>113</sup> The Muslim religion, too, enjoins upon its followers to revere their mothers for "Paradise lies at the feet of the mother."<sup>114</sup> From the king down to the peasant, all had the greatest respect for their mothers and for elderly women whose commands were invariably obeyed. We have numerous instances recorded in the contemporary records of the period of Mughal kings who would travel some stages to receive their mothers. They would perform *kornish*, *sijdah* and *taslim*, when entering their presence.<sup>115</sup> Jahangir writes:

"I went to meet my mother at Dhar (near Lahore) and performed *kornish*, *sijdah* and *taslim* with all obedience and then took leave of her."<sup>116</sup>

On his birthday the Mughal emperor, accompanied by princes and nobles, would necessarily pay a visit to his

mother to receive her felicitations, and present her with rare gifts.<sup>117</sup> Sometimes the weighing ceremony took place in her palace.<sup>118</sup> It is interesting to recall in this connection that, according to Indian etiquette, the first lady of the realm was not the Empress Consort (except in the case of Nurjahan and Mumtaz Mahal) but the royal mother or royal sister.<sup>119</sup>

Perhaps no people showed greater regard for their mothers than the Rajputs. The Rajput mother occupied an honoured and exalted position in society. She claimed a full share in the glory of her sons who "imbibed at the maternal fount their first rudiments of chivalry, the importance of paternal instructions."<sup>120</sup> We can find no better illustration than to quote the ever recurring simile: "Make thy mother's milk resplendent." Rana Sangram Singh II of Mewar had made it a principle to pay his respects to his mother every morning before taking his meals. He would not go against the wishes of his mother, however unreasonable they might have been.<sup>121</sup> The call of the mother to her sons was irresistible. Sixteen-year-old newly married Fatta who commanded the Chittor fort during the famous assault by Akbar put on the "saffron robe" at the command of his mother and he and his bride died fighting against heavy odds.<sup>122</sup>

There are several recorded instances when ladies acted as mediators and successfully settled disputes. Khan Mirza was let off on the recommendation of Khanum.<sup>123</sup> Mubhib Ali was generously received at the court through the intervention of his wife, Nahib Begum.<sup>124</sup> Badaoni employed the services of the mother of Muqarrab Khan to settle his differences with the Khan.<sup>125</sup> Jahangir, who had been for years in rebellion, was forgiven by Akbar on the intercession of Salima Begum.<sup>126</sup> It was due to the pleadings of Jahanara that Aurangzeb was pardoned in 1653 and restored to the dignities and emoluments of which he had been deprived by Emperor Shahjahan.<sup>127</sup>

### Her economic position

So far as property rights were concerned, Muslim ladies were much better off than their Hindu sisters. A Muslim lady was entitled to a definite share in the inheritance<sup>128</sup> with an absolute right to dispose it of. Unlike her Hindu sister she retained this right even after marriage. Another method adopted to safeguard the interests of Muslim ladies after

marriage was *Mahr* or antenuptial settlement,<sup>129</sup> whereas a Hindu lady had no right to the property of her husband's parents. A Hindu lady was entitled to maintenance and residence expenses<sup>130</sup> besides movable property like ornaments, jewellery, costly apparel, etc.<sup>131</sup> About the immovable property, Orme writes :

"No property in land admits of disputes concerning them. The slavery to which the rights of parents and husband subject the female abolishes at once all fruits of dowries, divorce, jointures and settlements."<sup>132</sup>

It appears that constant seclusion brought about the social, political and intellectual stultification of women who could not exert themselves for their legitimate rights. From the legal standpoint they were reduced to a position of dependence in every sphere of life.

Indian women mostly confined themselves to household work. Those belonging to the agricultural and labouring classes helped their menfolk in agriculture, breeding of animals, spinning, weaving,<sup>133</sup> tailoring, etc. Some of them engaged themselves in independent professions like medicine, midwifery, and the like. The women at Surat earned money by unknitting woollen and silken fabrics after their colour had faded off.<sup>134</sup> Some of them even kept shops.<sup>135</sup> Many took up dancing and singing as a profession.<sup>136</sup> Stavorinus writes : "Moors and Bengalese take great delight in having women dance before them who are kept for that purpose and are educated from their infancy in the pursuit of this function."<sup>137</sup> They were extremely supple and were adepts in the art of dancing.<sup>138</sup> Muslim women usually liked to take up this profession, and some Hindu women were employed as musicians.<sup>139</sup>

Prostitution was regarded as a disgrace though some of the meaner sort adopted it and lived in separate quarters, usually outside the city.<sup>140</sup> There were many who took to medicine and were freely employed as midwives. In fact there was a separate caste that followed this profession. They could be recognised by the "tufts of silk on their shoes or slippers, all others wearing plain."<sup>141</sup> The more educated among them adopted teaching as a regular profession. Manucci writes: "Among them (royal household) there are matrons who teach reading and writing to princesses."<sup>142</sup>

### Her role in literature, art and administration

In spite of the *purdah* which obstructed high-class ladies from participating in the social life of the nation, quite a large number of talented women made a mark in different spheres during the two centuries of Mughal rule in India. The women of the richer classes were well-educated and many of them were not only patrons of the learned but themselves were poetesses of distinction and authoresses of scholarly works.<sup>143</sup> Gulbadan Begum, the author of the *Humayunnama*, and Jahanara, the biographer of Shiblyah and Munisul Arwah, hold an enviable position among the literary figures of that age. Jan Begum, the daughter of Khan-i-Khanan, is said to have written a commentary on the *Quran*.<sup>144</sup> Mira Bai, Salima Sultana, a niece of Emperor Humayun, Nur Jahan,<sup>145</sup> Siti-un-Nisa, the tutoress of Jahanara and renowned as "the princess of poets" and Zeb-un-Nisa, the eldest daughter of Aurangzeb, were poetesses of distinction. The authorship of *Diwan-i-Makhfi* is ascribed to her. Ramabhadramba, the author of *Raghunathabhyudayam*, Madhuravani, translator in verse of the *Andhra-Ramayana*, Tirumalamba, author of *Varadambikaparinayam*, and Mohanangi, author of the love poem *Marchiparinayam*, are well-known Sanskrit poetesses of the period.<sup>146</sup> In Maharashtra Aka Bai and Kena Bai, disciples of Ramdas Swami, were considered important literary figures in the 17th century.

In the administrative sphere, too, they did not lag behind. Some of the greatest women administrators of all ages belong to this period. Maham Anaga, the chief nurse of Akbar, controlled the affairs of the state for full four years (1560-64)<sup>147</sup> by sheer audacity and cleverness. Rani Durgavati, the Chandel princess of Gondwana, "famous for her beauty and accomplishments,"<sup>148</sup> governed her country with great courage and capacity.<sup>149</sup> Her country was better administered and more prosperous than that of Akbar the Great.<sup>150</sup> Rani Karmavati, wife of Rana Sanga, almost ruled Mewar after the death of her husband. It was her tact and administrative ability which saved Mewar during the regime of her incompetent son, Vikramaditya.<sup>150\*</sup> Chand Bibi's<sup>151</sup> name shines brilliantly in the annals of Ahmednagar, and Makhduma-o-Jahan ruled the Deccan very ably as a regent on behalf of Nizam Shah of the Bahmani family.<sup>152</sup> Sahibji, the daughter of Ali Mardan, was a



wonderfully clever and able lady. She was the actual governor of Kabul during her husband's viceroyalty. She displayed her great administrative qualities after the death of her husband by ruling over the turbulent Afghans without allowing any serious opposition.<sup>153</sup> Nur Jahan, "the light of the world," was the real power behind the Jahangiri throne. So supreme was her sway over the emperor, who had for all practical purposes sold the empire for "a bottle of wine and a piece of meat," that even the proudest peers of the realm paid their homage to her, knowing full well that a word from her would make or mar their career. "When in power she ruled everything, when out of power she abstained religiously from all active life." Such was her nature.

The Maratha king Raja Ram's widow, Tarabai Mohite, as regent for her son Shivaji II, a boy under 10 years, became the supreme guiding force in Maharashtra.<sup>154</sup> She displayed such marvellous capacity and administrative ability in encountering the Mughal onslaught that threatened to engulf the Maratha state that all the efforts of Emperor Aurangzeb failed miserably. As Sir Jadunath Sarkar has observed, "Her administrative genius and strength of character saved the nation in that awful crisis."

Indian women belonging to royal and noble families, particularly the Rajputanis, were trained as soldiers and often displayed great bravery, courage and heroism. We have already referred to the part played by Fatta's mother in the defence of Chittor.<sup>155</sup> The valiant Durgavati was India's Joan of Arc. She fought and won many a battle against Baz Bahadur and the Minas.<sup>156</sup> Her end was no less noble. Seated on a fiery elephant, clothed in armour and a steel helmet on her head, she calmly yet resolutely directed her army against Akbar's hordes with utmost zeal and ability. When despaired of victory she said: "It is true we are overcome in war but shall we be ever vanquished in honour?"<sup>157</sup> and stabbed herself to death.<sup>158</sup> Chand Bibi, a famous Muslim heroine, personally defended the fort of Ahmednagar against the mighty forces of Akbar.<sup>159</sup> Nurjahan gave ample proof of her martial capabilities in leading an attack against Mahabat Khan.<sup>160</sup> Such examples can be multiplied. But these are enough to show that medieval Indian ladies could defend themselves and their country.<sup>161</sup>

**High character of Hindu women**

The chastity of Hindu women was proverbial. Several travellers on different occasions have made a special mention of the high character of Hindu ladies. Thevenot presents it as an example to all the women of the East.<sup>162</sup> Akbar held a high opinion of the chastity of the Hindu women, who, in spite of being sometimes neglected, "are flaming torches of love and fellowship."<sup>163</sup> Jahangir, too, admired the chastity of Hindu ladies who would not allow "the hand of any unlawful person touch the skirt of their chastity and would perish in flames."<sup>164</sup> Jayasi in his famous work, *Padmavat*, admires the high character of Hindu women and their love and adoration for their husbands. He says : "*Sati* burns herself for the devotion to her lord ; if there is truth in her heart then the fire is cooled." Adultery and other immoral practices were rare among both sexes.<sup>165</sup> Tavernier writes : "Adultery is very rare among them and as for sodomy I never heard it mentioned."<sup>166</sup> Death was the usual punishment for those who indulged in such vices.<sup>167</sup> Sometimes the guilty were deprived of their noses.<sup>168</sup> Ovington rebukes husbands for keeping a strict watch over their wives in spite of the latter's unfailing modesty.<sup>169</sup> If anyone looked at them deliberately in the bazar or even while they stood at their doors, they resented it as an affront and uttered "*Dekh na mar*" (Look here and don't you die), so writes Grose.<sup>170</sup>

Death had no terror for these heroic ladies when their honour was at stake. It was certainly less dreadful than dishonour and captivity. With patriotic pride and songs of their country's glory on their lips, they would desperately resort to *Jauhar* when despaired of victory. "*Jauhar*, according to Hindu custom," so writes Jahangir, "is the fire of fame and chastity, so that the hand of no unlawful person should touch the skirt of their chastity."<sup>171</sup> Such was the ideal of India's womanhood during the Mughal age.

## NOTES

1. Hymns of the Rigveda, I, pp. 96, 106, 172, 182, 463 ; *Hindu Law* by H.S. Gour, p. 1174 ; *The Position of Women in Hindu Law* by D.N. Mitter, pp. 600-1.

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2. *The Spirit of Indian Civilization*, p. 157 ; Majumdar, *The Vedic Age*, pp. 512-13 ; *The Position of Women in Hindu Law*, pp. 63, 79, 97, 100 ; *Women in the Sacred Scriptures of the Hindus*, p. 71.
3. Rigveda, X, 85, 27 ; *The Position of Women in Hindu Law*, pp. 170, 196-98.
4. *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization* by A.S. Altekar, p. 206.
5. Mazumdar, B.P., *Socio-Economic History of Northern India*, 1960, p. 141.
6. Rashid, A., *Society and Culture in Medieval India*, 1969, pp. 141-42.
7. *Ibid*, p. 206 ; *The Position of Women in Hindu Law*, p. 170.
8. Arabia and Turkistan. *Persian Women and their Ways*, pp. 60-64.
9. Badaoni, II, pp. 391-92 ; Tr., II, pp. 404-6.
10. *The Spirit of Indian Civilization*, pp. 163-64.
11. Cooper, Elizabeth, *Harem and the Purdah*, p. 65.
12. Mandelslo, p. 51 ; Della Valle, p. 461 ; Bernier, p. 413.
13. *Padavali Bangiya* of Vidyapati Thakur (Tr. Coomaraswami and Arunsen, London, 1915).
14. Pelsaert's *India*, p. 64.
15. Ovington, p. 211.
16. *Ibid*.
17. *John Marshall in India*, p. 328.
18. Mandelslo, p. 51.
19. Della Valle, p. 411.
20. Mandelslo, p. 51 ; Bernier, p. 413.
21. Tavernier, p. 125.
22. *Storia*, II, pp. 333-34.
23. Bernier, p. 374.
24. *Studies in Mughal India*, p. 116.
25. Ovington, p. 213.
26. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 384 ; Hamilton, I, p. 163.
27. *Persian Women and Their Ways*, p. 61.
28. Hamilton, I, p. 163 (New Edition) MX CCXXVII).
29. Ovington, p. 211.
30. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 181.
31. Mandelslo, p. 66 ; Della Valle, p. 24 ; De Laet, p. 81.

32. Della Valle, p. 430.
23. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 182.
34. Della Valle, p. 434. Wheeler's *History of India*, IV, Pt. II, (London, 1881).
35. De Laet, p. 81.
36. Grose, I, p. 193.
37. Mandelslo, p. 51.
38. D. Laet, p. 81.
39. Tod, II, pp. 710-11.
40. Grose, I, pp. 114-15.
41. Ovington, p. 320.
42. A Rajput is often heard to say: "Accursed to the day when a woman child is born to me." Tod, II, pp. 739-40. A verse of the Atharv-Veda rightly echoes the general desire of the birth of a son and not a daughter. "The birth of a girl grant it elsewhere, here grant a boy." Atharv-Veda, VI, 2-3.
43. *Storia*, II, p. 343.
44. R. & B., I, pp. 1-2.
45. *A.N.*, III, pp. 58 and 260 ; Tr., III, pp. 83 and 378. Also see *Storia*, II, p. 343.
46. Altekar, p. 9.
47. Tod, II, pp. 739-40.
48. "Marry whatever woman you like, three and three, four and four," the *Quran* instructs.
49. Badaoni, II, p. 356 ; Tr., II, p. 367.
50. Badaoni, II, pp. 208-9 ; Tr., II, p. 212.
51. Badaoni, II, p. 356 ; Tr., II, p. 367.
52. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 277.
53. Saying of Khan-i-Azam Mirza Aziz Koka vide *I.N.*, p. 230 ; *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 327.
54. Mandelslo, p. 64 ; Thevenot, Ch. I, p. 88.
55. *Ibid.* Pelsaert's *India*, p. 66.
56. Pelsaert's *India*, p. 66.
57. According to Mukundram, polygamy prevailed in Hindu society at that time, though it was not highly favoured. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 178.
58. Della Valle, (Ed. Edward Grey), I, pp. 82-83.
59. Mandelslo, p. 52.
60. Hamilton, I, p. 157 (New Edition).

61. Orme's *Fragments*, p. 408.
62. Stavorinus, I, p. 440.
63. *Ibid* ; Mandelslo, p. 52.
64. Orme's *Fragments*, p. 438.
65. *Storia*, III, p. 55 ; Tod, II, p. 712.
66. Hindus, as a protection against Muslim raiders who would not usually carry off married women, resorted to early marriage of their daughters. It also acted as a safeguard against vices and helped the bride to know her husband before physical consummation. Tavernier, XXIV, p. 181. *Persian Women and Their Ways*, p. 109. Akbar abhorred marriages before the age of puberty. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 277. European travellers write about the early marriages of young girls. Manucci (III, pp. 59-60) writes : "They married off their girls even before they were able to speak." "Married before the age of ten years," (*Early Travels*, p. 17) ; "Several years before the age of puberty," *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 277 ; according to Thevenot, at the age of four, five or six years ; while Tavernier puts the marriage age at seven or eight.
67. Altekar, p. 73.
68. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 178. Akbar's orders prohibiting marriage of girls before 12 years and boys before 16 did not stop this practice ; Badaoni, II, p. 338 ; Tr. II, p. 349.
69. Pelsaert's *India*, p. 82.
70. *Storia*, III, p. 55.
71. *Ibid*, pp. 152, 155.
72. Altekar, p. 49. For dowry refer to Purchas' *India*, p. 191 ; Saletore, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 190-91.
- 72.\* Dasgupta, T.C., *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 3 as quoted in Misra, Rekha, *Women in Mughal India*, p. 131.
73. *Storia*, III, p. 55.
74. *Ibid*.
75. Badaoni, II, p. 391 ; Tr., II, p. 405.
76. Purchas' *India*, p. 90 ; *Early Travels*, p. 221.
77. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 277.
78. Tod, I, p. 441.
79. Tod, II, p. 783.
80. Tod, II, pp. 731-32.

81. Altekar, p. 396 ; while going to enrol his son in the school, we find Kalu, the father Guru Nanak, asking his wife for some money ; Macauliffe's *Sikh Religion*, I, pp. 2-3.
82. *Storia*, III, p. 155.
83. According to the traveller, they considered pregnancy to be a very clear proof of the blessing of Goddess Lakshmi. Bartolomeo, pp. 253-54.
84. *Storia*, III, p. 155 ; Macauliffe, I, p. 242.
85. Stavorinus writes : "The women live in the strictest subjection to their husbands." Stavorinus, I, pp. 440-41 ; *Matla-ul-Alwar* of Amir Khusrau, pp. 192, 117. See *Padmavat* edited by Grierson and Dvivedi, p. 256.
86. R. & B., I, p. 359.
87. Tod, II, p. 713.
88. Tod, II, p. 713.
89. *A.N.*, II, p. 217 ; Tr., II, p. 336. Also see Tod, II, pp. 784-85 for another instance.
90. Tod, II, pp. 728-30.
91. Bernier, p. 259.
92. *H.N.*, G., (Bev.), p. 151.
93. Bernier, p. 41.
94. Tavernier, III, p. 181.
95. *Ibid.*
96. Ovington, p. 331. According to the traveller, sometimes husbands would burn themselves with their wives out of sheer love, p. 343.
97. High dowries, no doubt, prevented rash divorces, but Akbar disapproved high dowries. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 277. For high dowries prevalent in those days, *T.A.*, II, trans., p. 616.
98. Della Valle, (Ed. Edward Grey), I, pp. 82-83.
99. Stavorinus, I, p. 440 ; Mandelslo, p. 52.
100. Altekar, p. 102.
101. Della Valle, (Ed. Edward Grey), I, pp. 82-83.
102. This prohibition was complete in the higher section of the society, while those belonging to the lower stratum continued to remarry ; Altekar, p. 183.
103. Ovington, pp. 323-24.
104. "Force is not applied as they say and it may be true at least in the countries where Mohammadan commands, for



there no woman is suffered to be burnt without leave of the Governor of the place to whom it belongs if not to examine whether the woman be willing and because there is also paid a good deal of money." Della Valle (Ed. Edward Grey), I, p. 85 ; *Storia*, III, p. 156 ; *Waqyat-i-Jahangiri*, E. & D., VI, p. 376.

105. Ovington, p. 323.
106. Tod, II, p. 865.
107. Mandelslo, p. 86 ; Bernier, p. 314 ; Thevenot, III, Chap. XLIV, p. 84 ; Stavorinus, I, pp. 440-41.
108. Nicholas Withington (1612-16) in *Early Travels*, p. 219 ; *Storia*, III, p. 91.
109. Della Valle, p. 435 ; Bernier, p. 314.
110. *Storia*, III, p. 60 ; Thevenot, III, Chap. XLIX, p. 84.
111. Thevenot, III, Chap. XLIX, p. 84. According to Ovington (p. 332) sometimes Brahmans left large amounts of money for the maintenance of their widows.
- 111.\* *Haft Tamasha* (Urdu), pp. 138-39, quoted in *Burhan*, Oct. 1969, pp. 282-83.
112. *The Spirit of Indian Civilization*, p. 158.
113. Apastamba, II, 5-11-7.
114. Muhammad is reported to have said. *Women under Islam*, p. 13.
115. *Tuzuk*, Lowe, p. 62. Also see Macauliffe, I, p. 96.
116. *Ibid.* For another instance see R. & B., I, p. 78 ; for Babar's respect for his step-grandmother see *A.N.*, I, p. 90 ; Tr., I, p. 231.
117. *Ain*, I, pp. 256, etc.
118. See Chapter on Festivals.
119. *Aurangzib*, Sarkar, Vol. III, p. 57.
120. Tod, I, p. 642, quoted in *Hindu Superiority*, 1917, p. 99.
121. Tod, I, p. 479.
122. Tod, I, p. 326.
123. *A.N.*, I, pp. 90-91 ; Tr., I, pp. 232-33.
124. Badaoni, II, p. 136 ; Tr., II, p. 138.
125. *Ibid.*, p. 87 ; Tr., II, p. 88.
126. *Takmil-i-Akbarnama* (E. & D.), VI, pp. 108-9 ; K.K., I, pp. 223-25.
127. Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal ; *Introducing India*, Part I, 1949, p. 101.

128. "A daughter was absolutely assured of one-half a son's share of an inheritance. Under all conditions women received a half share." *Harem and the Purdah*, p. 67.
129. *Women under Islam*, p. 27. "Of a deceased husband's property, the wife received 1/8 if there were children, 1/4 if there were none and with right to dispose of as she pleased." *Harem and the Pardah*, p. 88. Ali Sher, ruler of Srinagar (ascended 1342 A.D.), abolished the custom under which a childless widow, though unchaste, obtained a share of her husband's property from her father-in-law. *Delhi Sultanate*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, p. 376.
130. *The Position of Women* by Menon, p. 25.
131. Altekar, p. 259. This is called *Stri Dhan*.
132. Orme's *Fragments*, p. 438.
133. "They would make veils called *frinis*." Tavernier, II, p. 127. *Maasir* refers to a woman who used to make bracelets ; *Maasir*, I, p. 532.
134. *Ibid*, p. 132.
135. Badaoni, II, pp. 301-2 ; Tr., II, p. 311.
136. *Ain*, III, p. 257 ; *Malwa in Transition* by Raghunath Singh, p. 335.
137. Stavorinus, I, p. 437.
138. Bernier, p. 274 ; Della Valle, I, (Ed. Edward Grey), p. 71.
139. *Storia*, II, p. 337.
140. For details refer to P.N. Chopra, "Experiments in Social Reforms in Medieval India," *Ramakrishna Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. II. Also see Saletore, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 165-66 ; Stavorinus, I, p. 409.
141. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 281.
142. *Storia*, II, pp. 330-31.
143. See Chapter on Education.
144. Akbar rewarded her 50,000 *dinars* for her work.
145. For specimen see K.K., I, pp. 270-71.
146. *History of Sanskrit Literature* by Das-Gupta and S.K. De, pp. 417-18. The unfinished version of the *Ramayana* by Chandravati, a Bengali poetess of the 16th century, is still widely known in parts of East Bengal (Tara Ali Beg, *Women of India*, p. 183). Also see Saletore, *op. cit.*, II, p. 163.
147. *A.N.*, II, p. 100 ; Tr., II, p. 151.

148. Badaoni, II, p. 66 ; Tr., II, p. 65 ; E. & D., V, pp. 169, 288. *The Spirit of Indian Civilization* by D.N. Roy, p. 161.
149. According to Abul Fazl, she distinguished herself by her courage, counsel and magnificence. *A.N.*, II, pp. 209 and 214 ; Tr., II, pp. 224 and 230.
150. Smith, *Akbar the Great Mogul*, pp. 69-70.
- 150.\* Sharma, G.N., *Mewar and the Mughal Emperors*, p. 50.
151. Queen Dowager of Bijapur, sister of Burhan-ul-Mulk of Ahmednagar. Ferishta, III, p. 312.
152. *Outlines of Islamic Culture* by A.M.A. Shushtery, Vol. II, Appendix A, p. 771.
153. *Studies in Mughal India*, pp. 114-117.
154. K.K., II, pp. 469, 516 ; Sarkar, *Aurangzib*, pp. 199-201 ; *History of the Mahrattas* by James Grant Duff, Vol. I, pp. 323-24.
155. Tod, Vol. I, p. 381.
156. *A.N.*, II, p. 325 ; Smith's *Akbar*, pp. 69-70. For the bravery of Kashmiri ladies, a little before our period, refer to Dr. D.C. Sircar, *Great Women of India*, p. 290 ; Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan* (ed. Crooke), Vol. I, p. 242.
157. Ferishta, II, p. 218.
158. *Tarikh-i-Alfi*, E. & D., V, p. 169.
159. Ferishta, III, p. 312.
160. *Iqbalnama*, pp. 262-63 (E. & D.), VI, pp. 425-26.
161. R. & B., II, p. 268.
162. Thevenot, III, Chap. XXIV, p. 47.
163. *A.N.*, III, p. 256 ; Tr., III, p. 372.
164. R. & B., II, p. 268.
165. Stavorinus, II, p. 487.
166. Tavernier, III, p. 181.
167. Stavorinus, II, p. 497.
168. Mandelslo, p. 95.
169. Ovington, p. 211.
170. Grose, I, p. 240.
171. Tod, I, p. 363.

## CHAPTER 6

# Education

In the words of a modern Indologist, "Education is no exotic in India. There is no country where the love of learning had so early an origin or has exercised so lasting and powerful an influence. From the simple poets of the Vedic age to the Bengali philosopher (Rabindranath Tagore) of the present day, there has been an uninterrupted succession of teachers and scholars."<sup>1</sup>

### Primary education

Primary schools, in the modern sense of the word, probably did not exist in ancient India. But the teaching system, whatever it might have been, received a great impetus after the establishment of Buddhist monasteries. *Pathshalas* or schools attached to temples, Hindu or Buddhist, and maintained by grants or endowments made for that specific purpose came into prominence.<sup>2</sup> These continued to exist even up to the 19th century in Bengal, Bihar and the Punjab,<sup>3</sup> and most probably in other parts of the country also. Mandelslo writes: "Brahmins have also the oversight of schools where they teach children to read and write."

These were mostly private schools. Students and scholars resorted to these teachers who established schools at their own expense, but solicited contributions not only to raise the building but also to feed their pupils. Usually made of clay, these schools consisted of three rooms and sometimes eight or ten in two rows with a reading-room open on all sides at the farther end.

Hindus would introduce their children to regular education by a formal ceremony called *upanayana*, the normal age for which differed for various castes and for different ideals and

aims.<sup>4</sup> The capacity and aptitude of the boy were also taken into consideration. However, generally speaking, a Hindu child had his first lessons at about the age of five either from his father at home or from a teacher at school.<sup>5</sup> The Mughals, too, would send their children to school before they were five years of age. The *maktab* ceremony was usually performed when a child was four years, four months, and four days old,<sup>6</sup> usually after circumcision. Both Hindus and Muslims put their children to school at an auspicious hour after consulting the astrologer.<sup>7</sup>

It was essential for the service-class people to educate their sons in the court language. Brokers, bankers, and merchants sent their children to school to enable them to grasp the fundamentals of elementary arithmetic which were of importance to them in their daily transactions. Muslims, on the other hand, were less enthusiastic about the education of their sons. The views of a 17th-century traveller<sup>8</sup> that Muslims, who held high government posts or who were big businessmen, were "proud, scorn to be taught, jealous of the baseness of mankind durst not trust their children under tuition" and that "they were by nature slothful and would seldom take pains" seem to be an exaggeration, whereas Mandelslo's contention that Muslims took special interest to educate their sons as soon as they reached the school-going age appears to be true only in the case of the highly placed class of Muslim nobles,<sup>9</sup> who could also afford to keep a good many Hindu accountants to look after their business and estates.<sup>10</sup> These nobles would not necessarily send their children to schools, but usually employed tutors to teach them at home.<sup>11</sup> But so far as the common Muhammadan was concerned, the fact remains that he was reluctant to attend to his studies and preferred to be trained in the art of warfare and to be enlisted in the imperial army<sup>12</sup> where he could hope for a bright future.

*Pathshalas* and *maktabas* were the primary institutions which a beginner attended. The beginner received his first lesson there in the alphabet from a *pandit* or a *maulavi*. *Maktabas* were a very common sight during the Mughal period. Cities and towns and certain villages swarmed with them. Della Valle probably refers to them when he writes that in Jahangir's time there were private schools in every town and village.<sup>13</sup> There is

also a reference to a public school run by a Hindu teacher in Madura in 1660 A.D.<sup>14</sup>

There was no printed primer, but the children were made to write the alphabet and figures on wooden boards or on the dust of the ground with their fingers.<sup>15</sup> Usually the pupils assembled under the shade of a tree where they arranged themselves in rows on the ground, and their master attended them standing or sitting on a mat or deer-skin."<sup>16</sup> Combined letters were practised later and difficult words selected from a standard book, usually the Holy *Quran*, were dictated. Thus they perfected their spelling and were also made to understand the meanings of the words they wrote. Great importance was given to calligraphy and students were instructed to imitate and practise the style of the best calligraphists of the day.<sup>17</sup>

As soon as the boys could read and write,<sup>18</sup> grammar followed by the text of the Holy *Quran*, was invariably introduced in every *maktab*.<sup>19</sup> Every child had to learn it (the *Quran*) by rote.<sup>20</sup> Most of the boys could read even if they did not understand the text.<sup>21</sup> No evidence is available about the nature of religious instruction given to Hindu children in *pathshalas*.<sup>22</sup> Growse, however, thinks that the *Ramayana* formed the chief text in primary schools.<sup>23</sup> But as the *Ramayana* was put in Hindi garb by Tulsi Das at the end of Akbar's reign, that could not obviously have been a textbook till the end of the 16th century. According to Bernier, the *Puranas* were taken up after learning the alphabet.<sup>24</sup> Malik Muhammad Jayasi corroborates it in his *Padmavat*.<sup>25</sup> The teaching of elementary mathematics also went side by side with literacy. The Hindus were particularly proficient in it. There was and still is in vogue among them an interesting and useful way of committing to memory the multiplication tables called *Pahare* which were practised in a class or by a group of class-fellows. A boy sang his lesson : *Ek Duna Duna, Do Dune Char*—that is, one time two makes two and two times two make four. The others repeated it jointly and wrote after him in the like manner.<sup>26</sup> After learning the *Quran*, Muslim students took lessons in the *Gulistan*, *Bostan* and poems of Firdausi.<sup>27</sup> Sanskrit scholars, on the other hand, studied the *Puranas*, *Upanishads* and *Shastras* and sometimes the *Vedas*.<sup>28</sup>

There were three kinds of schools : in the first, grammar,

poetry and the *Puranas* and the *Smritis* were studied ; in the second, the law and the *Puranas*, and in the third, *Nyaya Darshan* or logic was taught. At Banaras there were in existence different colleges for specialization in different subjects such as the *Vedas*, grammar, poetry, logic, law and astronomy.<sup>29</sup>

It appears that classes were held twice a day, in the morning and evening. Some interval was allowed in between for meals. Abdul-i-Haqq informs us that his house was two miles from the school and he used "to go twice a day to college, morning and evening, during the heat of one season and the cold of another, returning for a short time for a meal to his own house."<sup>30</sup>

The average number of pupils with each teacher was usually four or five but it seldom exceeded the maximum of fifteen. A teacher was usually helped by his senior pupils who acted as assistant masters.<sup>31</sup>

No fee was paid, as to give and receive instruction is enjoined by the sacred books of the Brahmins. The *Saura Purana* condemns a teacher who teaches for money. Manu also declares him to be guilty of a sin.<sup>32</sup> The tradition continued during the Mughal age. "Hindus," writes Marshal, "never teach their children for money ; those they teach they give (them) victuals, too, besides their learning which is esteemed as a gift."<sup>33</sup> The teacher, naturally, had to look to the rich, the nobles and merchants for his subsistence, which was gladly made available.

The teacher was received with the utmost respect by his pupils who would humbly touch his feet and speak respectfully and only with his permission. If someone misbehaved, he was sure to be expelled from the school. "By these means," writes Bartolomeo, "the preceptor always receives that respect which is due to him, the pupils are obedient and seldom offend against rules which are so carefully inculcated."<sup>34</sup> Students were punished for their faults. Hindu law and custom did not allow severe punishment or torture. Negligence in doing the day's work, wilful mischief and bad manners were punished by detention after school hours or by ordering the delinquent student to write a lesson ten or fifteen times or by mild physical punishment like a slap on the face, boxing the ears, or making

him sit on the tips of his toes and hold his ears with his hands from under his thighs.<sup>35</sup>

The relations between the class-fellows and even school-fellows were very friendly. They would hold their class-mates in high esteem even when old and thought it a privilege to be of some service to them.<sup>36</sup> The teachers who could lecture without the help of notes or books were highly respected and remembered for generations. Badaoni is full of praise for Mian Shaikh Abdullah of Badaon whom "I never saw in the course of his teaching to be under the necessity of referring to a book for the purpose of solving those questions and obscure subtleties, for whatever he had once seen he had on the tip of his tongue."<sup>37</sup> The promptness in solving knotty problems as well as ready wit in answering complicated questions was considered another qualification.<sup>38</sup>

### **Higher seats of Hindu learning**

A university came into existence where a number of colleges were established (usually in a town of special sanctity). Banaras and Nadia are the examples. Bernier writes :

"Banaras is a kind of university, but it has no college or regular classes as in our universities, but it resembles rather the school of ancients, the masters being spread over different parts of the town in private houses."<sup>39</sup>

Other university towns were of the same type.

The chief centres of learning or universities, if we may call them so, were at places where the renowned scholars had made their homes. Muslims invariably liked capitals, provincial or imperial, whereas Hindus preferred shrines and sacred places where pilgrim traffic supplied a subsidiary source of income to the famous teachers residing there. Thus free from the worries of making a livelihood, they pursued their studies undisturbed. Banaras (Varanasi), Nadia or Navadvipa in Bengal, Mithila, Prayag, Ayodhya, Srinagar, Tirhut, Thatta, Madura, Multan, Sirhind, etc. were the famous seats of Hindu learning.

### **Banaras**

Banaras as a pre-eminent centre of learning in the East suffered considerably for three centuries (A.D. 1200—1500) when the crescent banner was first planted on this land. Fearing



religious persecution, many of the learned families sought safety in safer places. However, a new era dawned with the advent of the Mughals. We find once again "the lamp of Sanskrit burning luminously at Banaras from the 16th century." It began to draw more scholars from the remotest corners of India. Several learned families shifted again to this place.<sup>41</sup> Dharmadhikari, Sesa, Bhatta and Mouni were the families which figured prominently for more than three centuries (1500-1650). Nana Pandit (1570-1630), author of *Dattaka-Mimamsa*, Khandera, author of *Parasurama-Prakasa*, both belonged to the Dharmadhikari family. Sankarbhatta, author of *Davitan*, *Vratamaynkha* and many other works, Gangabhatta, author of a dozen works on *Mimamsa-Sisavishnu*, and Chintamani, author of *Rasamanjari-Parimala*, belonged to Sesa family. Kabir, Tulsi Das carried on their literary activities at Banaras. Guru Nanak and Chaitanya paid visits to this holiest of Hindu shrines. Raja Jai Singh founded there a college for the education of the princes.<sup>42</sup> There were other seminaries<sup>43</sup> where renowned pandits interpreted and expounded the fundamentals of Hindu religion and philosophy.<sup>44</sup>

### Nadia

Nadia in Bengal was, after Banaras, the greatest centre of Hindu learning in the country during the Mughal period. Students from all parts of the country gathered at Nadia. It was a grand old university, which rose to importance after the destruction of the Buddhist universities of Nalanda and Vikramaditya gave Brahmanical learning an opportunity to renew its foundations during Muslim rule (1198-1757). It boasted of its three branches at Navadvipa, Santipura and Gopalpara. In Navadvipa alone there were 100 students and not less than 150 teachers. The number rose to 4,000 students and six hundred teachers in 1680.<sup>45</sup> Vasudeva Sarvabhadra (1450-1525), the great scholar of the 16th century, was the founder of the famous Nadia school of *Nyaya* which outrivalled Mithila when its first student, Raghunatha, defeated in argument the head of the Logic Department at Mithila. Raghunatha Siromani was also the founder of a school of logic which produced many scholars of repute. Among them Mathuranatha (A.D. 1570), the author of many works on

known by the general name *Mathuri*, Ramabhadra, himself the founder of a school, and Gadadhara Bhattacharya (A.D. 1650), "the prince of Indian logicians" and the author of a special literature "*Gadadhari*," all deserve mention. Raghunandana created a Chair of *Smṛiti* in the 16th century along with the Chair of Logic at Nadia. The Chair of Astronomy was added in 1718 by Ramarudra Vidyanidhi.<sup>46</sup> Godavari, too, has been mentioned as a centre of Hindu learning.<sup>47</sup>

### Mithila

Mithila's reputation as a centre of learning dates back to the times of *Upanishads*. It retained its importance throughout and made notable contributions in the realm of difficult and scientific subjects. Even during the Mughal days, it used to draw students from all parts of the country for specialized study in logic. Raghunandandasa Rai, a pupil of this college, performed intellectual *digvijaya* at the instance of Akbar. The Emperor was so much pleased with him that he gave him the whole town of Mithila as a gift. The obedient pupil in turn offered it to his teacher, Mahesa Thakkura.<sup>48</sup>

### Madura

Madura was the chief centre for studies in Indian philosophy. There were several colleges of Brahmins where over 10,000 students specialized in its different branches. Bisnagar and the great Nayaka had made splendid foundations whose revenues were allotted for the remuneration of the teachers and subsistence of the students.<sup>49</sup>

### Other centres of learning

Tirhut<sup>50</sup> was a famous centre of Hindu learning, and Gokaranhad was a great university of the Brahmins.<sup>51</sup> Thatta was no less important and, according to Hamilton, there were about 400 colleges there. Theology, philology and politics were some of the special courses of study there.<sup>52</sup> Another big centre was Multan where Hindus had established several schools.<sup>53</sup> Students crowded Multan from all parts of India to study and specialize in difficult sciences like astronomy, astrology, mathematics, medicine, etc., of which the Brahmins had complete mastery.<sup>54</sup> Sirhind had the distinction of having a very famous school of

medicine, most probably *Ayurvedic*. It was the main centre which supplied doctors to the whole empire.<sup>55</sup>

In the South there were a number of centres of Hindu learning. Madura was the most important among them. Kanchipuram in Chingleput, Adayapalam, Vetur, Virnicipuram and Vepu in North Arcot were some of the other centres of Hindu learning in the South. Rajas of Kerala were great patrons of learning.

In Assam the most important centre of Hindu learning was at Kamarupa. The renowned scholars from this place visited Nalanda and other centres and held debates with them. The rulers of Kachari, Kamata and Koch were great patrons and helped in the advancement of learning.

### Higher seats of Muslim learning

*Madrasas* were secondary schools or colleges for higher learning. Sometimes they were attached to a chief mosque of the city.<sup>56</sup> No exact information can be had of the actual number of *madrasas* at these places. Few and scattered references are to be found here and there in the biographies of the learned employed in teaching. Jahangir is said to have repaired even those *madrasas* that had been in ruins for thirty years.<sup>57</sup> He issued a regulation that all property "not legitimately claimed on the death of a rich man would escheat to the Crown to be used for building and repairing *madrasas*."

### Agra

Muslim divines and scholars, unlike Hindu pandits, chose for their permanent dwellings big cities where they could easily find suitable jobs, admirers, followers, and pupils. Agra, Delhi, Lahore, Jaunpur, Gujarat, Sialkot, Ahmedabad, etc. attracted their attention and became the main centres of Muslim learning.

Agra enjoyed a pre-eminent position as an educational centre throughout the Mughal period. Many colleges of Islamic learning were established there by the Mughal emperors,<sup>58</sup> nobles and learned scholars, such as Maulana Ala-ud-Din Lari,<sup>59</sup> Qazi Jalal-ud-Din of Multan,<sup>60</sup> Shaikh Abul Fath of Thaneshwar, Sayyid Rafi-ud-Din Safawi,<sup>61</sup> Mir Kalan Hariwi,<sup>62</sup> and others. A large number of advanced scholars used to gather to take

lessons from Sayyid Shah Mir of Samana who had his dwelling on the other side of the river Jamuna. His hospice assumed the appearance of a big college.<sup>63</sup> Mirza Muflis, the Uzbek, taught for four years in the Jami Masjid of Khwaja Muin-ud-Din Farrukhabadi in Agra.<sup>64</sup> Petermundy mentions that there was a college for Jesuits at Agra.<sup>65</sup>

### Delhi

Delhi, the imperial seat of a long line of ruling dynasties, was an older educational centre. It kept up its tradition during the Mughal regime and many new institutions were founded there.<sup>66</sup> On the bank of the Jamuna, Humayun built a school in honour of Zain-ud-Din Khafi.<sup>67</sup> Maham Anaga, too, established a *madrasa*, called Khair-ul-Manzil,<sup>68</sup> or Madrasa-i-Begam,<sup>69</sup> opposite the western gate of Purana Qila.<sup>70</sup> It was a residential *madrasa*. The students resided in the rooms of both the storeys, and the classes were held in the hall. Shaikh Abdullah of Talna's residence, a little before our period, was a famous resort of students. Hundreds of students gathered from distant places to take lessons from him. He could count some forty distinguished scholars among his pupils, including Mian Ladan and Jamal Khan of Delhi, Mian Sheikh of Gwalior, and Mian Sayyid Jalal of Badaon.<sup>71</sup> There was another *madrasa*, built on the roof of Humayun's tomb. Shaikh Abdul Haq, a contemporary of Jahangir, also refers to a *madrasa* in *Akhbar-ul-Akhyar*. Shahjahan built a magnificent royal *madrasa* known as *Dar-ul-Baq*a on the southern side of the Jama Masjid.<sup>72</sup> Madrasa-i-Rahimyya, known after the name of Abdur Rahim, father of Shah Waliullah, was built during Aurangzeb's time. It produced a number of well-known teachers, such as Abdul Aziz, Shah Ismail, and Abdul Qadir.

### Lahore

Lahore<sup>73</sup> was not such an extensive centre of learning as Delhi or Agra. However, it supplied teachers to a few colleges in other parts of India. Among the notables there Maulana Jalal of Tala and Mulla Imamuddin<sup>74</sup> may be particularly mentioned. Lahore's importance as an educational centre dates from the time of Aurangzeb when the reputation of its scholars "attracted many a pupil from far and wide."<sup>75</sup>

### Jaunpur and Gujarat

Jaunpur and Gujarat were two other centres where learned scholars had taken up their residence. Jaunpur, rightly called the Shiraz of India, came into prominence during the reign of Ibrahim Sharqi (1402-40) when it came to have several colleges and mosques. It retained its importance throughout the Mughal period. Scholars from far and wide came to study there. Mughal emperors up to the time of Muhammad Shah (1719-48) took keen interest in the progress of the institutions and exhorted the teachers not to relax in their scholarly efforts. Regular reports were asked for and enquiries made before making grants to them.<sup>76</sup> According to Mukundram, *maktabs* were set up in Gujarat where young Muhammadans were given instruction by pious *maulavis*,<sup>77</sup> such as Mian Wajih-ud-Din, Shaikh Gadai Dehlvi, the renowned scholar of Humayun's reign, who used to teach logic and philosophy to scholars that came from distant parts of India and abroad.<sup>78</sup> Aurangzeb issued instructions to Diwan of Gujarat to appoint every year teachers at the cost of the state and to pay stipends to students according to the recommendation of the Sadr of the province and the attestation of the teacher.<sup>79</sup> The Madrasa Faiz Safa was founded in Naharwara Pattan in Gujarat in 1092 A.H. It was attached to a mosque. Burhan Nizam Shah I built a college called Langar-i-Duwazda Imam,<sup>80</sup> at Ahmedabad for imparting Shia learning. He imported deeply learned men from Iraq, Arabia, Persia and upper India to teach in this college.<sup>81</sup> Akram-ud-Din also built there a magnificent college in 1697 A.D. at an estimated cost of Rs. 124,000.

### Kashmir

Kashmir, with its pleasant and refreshing climate, was a good centre of learning. Some rich scholars resorted to that valley to write their works in that cool and calm atmosphere.<sup>82</sup> Mulla Shah Badakhshi, a spiritual teacher of Jahanara, the eldest daughter of Shahjahan, took his early lessons in Kashmir.<sup>83</sup> Mirza Abu Talib Kalim went to Kashmir to complete his work on the poetical records<sup>84</sup> of the reign of Shahjahan.

### Other centres of Islamic learning

There were various other centres of learning and education.

Akbar built colleges at Fatehpur Sikri.<sup>85</sup> Abul Fazl also built here a *madrasa* which is still known after his name.<sup>86</sup> The grammarian Shaikh Sadullah's hospice in Bayana became a famous resort of students and religious men.<sup>87</sup> Aurangzeb confiscated from the Dutch the building called Farhangi Mahal in Lucknow, allotted it to an ulema family and so the Farhangi Mahal Madrasa was founded.<sup>88</sup> Shaista Khan, a noble, and Muhammad Azam, son of Aurangzeb, built *madrasas* at Dacca.<sup>89</sup> Sher Shah's *madrasa* at Narnaul, established in 1520 A.D., may also be mentioned.<sup>90</sup> Hamilton saw schools at Madras of the English, the Portuguese, the Hindus and the Muhammadans where "were taught their respective languages."<sup>91</sup> To other centres of learning, Ajmer, Burhanpur, Sambhal, Gwalior,<sup>92</sup> Sialkot,<sup>93</sup> Ambala and Thaneswar may also be added. Dacca in Bengal held a pre-eminent position as a centre of learning. Khan Muhammad Mirdha's mosque had a *maktab* and a *madrasa* attached to it.

### Mixed schools

There is some evidence to show that here and there some Muslim students attended the schools kept by Hindu teachers for instruction in subjects like astronomy, astrology mathematics, medicine, etc.<sup>94</sup> Till the time of Akbar, it seems, Hindus did not like to attend *madrasas*. But when Persian became the court language in the time of that monarch Hindus had to attend Muslim institutions to learn Persian.

### Duration of courses, tests and certificates

The courses of study usually varied from ten to twelve years for graduation.<sup>95</sup> Some more years were required for a doctorate after studying under a renowned scholar. Waman Pandit of Satara after getting some education from his father went to Banaras at the age of 18 to study Sanskrit and remained there for not less than twelve years and then returned home,<sup>96</sup> having completed his education in all the departments of knowledge.<sup>97</sup> Sur Das, the renowned Hindu poet of the 17th century, remained engaged in his studies at Banaras till he had attained the age of thirty.<sup>98</sup> Sayyid Abdullah, the author of *Tazkirah-i-Shushtar*, was a brilliant exception. He is said to have completed his full course of study at the age of fifteen, then

travelled to Isfahan, Azarbaijan and other parts of Persia and Turkey.<sup>99</sup>

No regular annual examinations were held in those days. A good mastery of certain specified courses of which the teacher was the sole judge was sufficient for promotion to the next standard. Thus it was not unnatural or surprising to see a boy promoted to the next class within six months of his joining. An unusual type of examination called *Salakapariksha* to judge the capacity of the pupil marked the termination of the graduation course in Mithila. A candidate was expected to explain correctly that page of the manuscript which was pierced last by a needle run through it.<sup>100</sup> No regular degrees were awarded. To have studied in a reputed institution or under a renowned teacher was the greatest qualification one could have. I have come across some instances of diplomas awarded or certificates issued by the great scholars of theology to their pupils after successful termination of their courses, which conferred upon the latter the authority to give instruction thereon. Shaikh-ul-Hidaya of Khairabad held a diploma from his tutor Shaikh Safi, the spiritual successor of Shaikh Sai'd, authorising him to give instruction.<sup>101</sup> Shaikh Yaqub received from Ibn-u-Haja a licence to give instruction in the traditions of Muhammad.<sup>102</sup> Sayyid Yasin, who studied the traditions in Hijaz, received the authority to give instruction thereon.<sup>103</sup>

Some sort of a certificate or diploma was also awarded in certain Hindu institutions. Graduates from the university of Mithila were allowed only to leave with their diplomas, but not with any manuscript. Raghunatha, a student of the Nadia university, was deputed to "exact from Mithila a charter to confer degrees." *Chhurika Bandhanam* resembles our present-day convocations. The occasion meant the tying of a dagger to the dress of the pupil as a token of his graduation.<sup>104</sup> Sometimes a title was conferred on a distinguished pupil. The great scholar Vasudeva after the completion of his course at Nadia was honoured by the title of *Sarvabhauma* in "recognition of his supreme merit."<sup>105</sup> *Peeyushavarsha*, *Pakshadhara* and *Akbariya Kalidasa* were also the titles conferred on Sanskrit scholars. Jayadeva, who was deeply learned in *Sutras* and *Sastras*, was honoured by the former titles.<sup>106</sup> Sri Hari, who flourished during the reign of Akbar, received the title of *Akbariya*

*Kalidasa*. Rambhadra, a sound grammarian, was known among his friends as *Pratvagra Patanjali*.<sup>107</sup> Raghunatha, who had completed the studies of *Vedyatan*, earned the title of *Sandak Vitu*.<sup>108</sup>

### Scholarship judged by reputation of one's teacher

After graduation the students who desired to go in for higher studies would spend some years under a renowned scholar to specialize in certain specific branches. Muslims invariably studied theology. It was not an easy affair to get oneself admitted to post-collegiate studies, as the teachers were reluctant to have more than a limited number of students and a selection had to be made. Mulla Shah Badakhshi refused to take Jahanara Begum as his pupil. It was only after several efforts that her request was granted.<sup>109</sup> Maulana Usman of Samana was a pupil of Hakim-ul-Mulk,<sup>110</sup> while the historian Badaoni studied under Maulana Mirza of Samarkand.<sup>111</sup> Nizum-ud-Din, the author of the *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, studied under Mulla Ali Sher.<sup>112</sup> Shaikh Yaqub of Kashmir obtained higher knowledge under Shaikh Hussain of Khwaraizm.<sup>113</sup> Badaoni used to take pride in the fact that his father had the privilege of studying under such a renowned scholar as Mir Sayyid Jalal, the saint, who had studied the traditional sayings of the Prophet under Mir Sayyid Rafi-ud-Din.<sup>114</sup> Chandra Bhan Brahman was a pupil of Mulla Abdul Karim.<sup>115</sup>

For still higher studies eager scholars visited the chief places of Muslim learning in Western and Central Asia, such as Mecca, Medina, Basra, Kufa, Yemen, Damascus, Cairo, Nishapur (Iran), Baghdad, Hijaz, Khurasan, etc. Many an Indian Muslim and one or two Hindus also repaired to these places and spent years in study and observation.<sup>116</sup>

### Learned disputations

Debates and disputations were held frequently on controversial topics of theology,<sup>117</sup> law, grammar, etc. The learned of the day would take part in them. This was one of the methods for the advancement of education as well as determining the scholar's place among the learned.<sup>118</sup> Venkatanath won the admiration of Yajnanarayana Diksita of the Tanjore court when he came out successful in a disputation with a celebrated scholar



who had commented upon *Sulba Sutras*.<sup>119</sup> Later on he vanquished his opponent in a disputation over the *Kakataliya*. Whenever two or more scholars met they discussed some controversial points. Arguments were advanced and quotations from standard works frequently mentioned in support of the contentions. Raghunatha, the first student of Nadia, defeated the teachers of Mithila in an open debate.<sup>121</sup> An appointment to the professorship in Nadia University was made after a debate between the selected candidates on certain special controversial topics in an assembly of scholars who acted as judges.<sup>122</sup> The scholar who could hold his own against others got the appointment.

### The courses of study

Very little information about the curriculum then in vogue is available. All contemporary records are silent on the point. Badaoni, while giving biographies of eminent persons, scholars and poets in his *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh* frequently refers merely to their having studied all the books included in the ordinary curriculum of the time,<sup>123</sup> but never mentions the names of the actual texts or the courses prescribed. Whatever little information we can collect is from stray accounts of the books studied by certain princes.

Badaoni differentiates the sciences which require the exercise of the reasoning faculty, such as philosophy, astronomy, geometry, astrology, geomancy, arithmetic, the preparation of talismans, incantations and mechanics from the rest,<sup>124</sup> which depend upon memory.<sup>125</sup> Abul Fazl, who was fully acquainted with the more systematic classification of the Hindus, is more specific. He distributes all the subjects in three categories.<sup>126</sup> *Ilahiyat*, the divine science includes everything connected with theology and the means of acquiring knowledge of God. *Riyazi*, as its name suggests, comprises the sciences which deal with quantities as mathematics, astronomy, music, mechanics, while the *Tajwid* sciences comprehend all physical sciences.<sup>127</sup>

The courses of study in Muslim institutions usually comprised grammar, rhetoric, logic, theology, metaphysics, literature and jurisprudence.<sup>128</sup> Astronomy, mathematics and medicine were included, and here Hindu influence was perceptible. Those who specialize in these difficult sciences Muslims often preferred

attend Hindu institutions. The Dar-i-Nizamiyyah of Mulla Nizamuddin of Shali, who lived during the reign of Aurangzeb, gives us a detailed list of the Arabic curriculum in vogue during the Mughal days. It includes, besides grammar, syntax, rhetoric, philosophy, logic, scholasticism, *tafsir*, *fich*, *usulu-i-fich*, *Hadis* and the science of mathematics. The detailed list of the Persian texts used in *madrasas* given in the *Khulasatu-i-Maktib*<sup>129</sup> written in 1688 A.D., presumably by a Hindu writer, agreeably coincides in a large measure with the list of the books prepared by the present author from various sources. The curious reader is referred to Appendix A for a list of these books.

Apart from modern experimental sciences, such as surgery, physics, chemistry, biology, zoology, etc., subjects of study in Hindu institutions were almost the same as in the present-day universities. The courses, especially in grammar and philosophy, were more comprehensive than in similar institutions of the contemporary world. It was, therefore, but natural for an individual to specialize only in certain branches of this vast field of knowledge. It must, however, be admitted that there had been a great deterioration in the standard of Sanskrit teaching and examination since the days of Harsha, and the students of Mughal India could not boast of that high level of scholarship of which their ancestors were proud. The Vedic studies had almost disappeared and after Sayana there was no commentator of the *Vedas*. Ganga Bhatta of Banaras was one of the few first-rate masters of the four *Vedas* and the six systems of Hindu philosophy<sup>130</sup>

Grammar was a full-fledged separate subject of post-graduate study like literature and philosophy. It was taken up at a very early age. Panini's classical *sutras* containing the rules of grammar in eight books called *Ashtadhyayi* were no longer commonly studied and their place was taken by *Siddhanta Kaumudi* of Bhattoji Dikshit.<sup>131</sup> Other popular grammars were *Katantra* and *Mugdharodh* of Bopadeva.

Logic was from very ancient times a very popular subject of study with Hindus, who made notable contributions to this science. The well-known six systems of philosophy were also studied.<sup>132</sup>

The chief subjects of study during the Mughal period have been dealt with briefly in the following pages,

Mathematics ranked first among the sciences included in the curriculum. Akbar issued a *farman* making it one of the compulsory subjects<sup>133</sup> to be taught in *madrasas*. Hindus, particularly proficient in this subject and travellers have, therefore, called them a "counting nation."<sup>134</sup> European visitors were wonder-struck<sup>135</sup> to see the skill and ingenuity of the Hindus who could solve orally difficult sums with the same accuracy and facility as the "readiest arithmetician can with his pen." The Muslims, too, distinguished themselves in this science.

Astronomy and astrology were subjects of faith with the people and the court, and their study was encouraged by the State. It formed part of regular courses in schools and colleges. Astronomy was a compulsory subject, while astrology was an optional one. Badaoni also remarks that some knowledge of astronomy was considered essential,<sup>138</sup> and Akbar issued a *farman* commending its study.<sup>139</sup> Brahmans<sup>140</sup> were famous for their skill in both these sciences and they never failed even a minute in predicting the time for the eclipse of the sun or moon.<sup>141</sup> Among the famous astrologers of the period mentioned Jotika Rai,<sup>142</sup> Kanjar Beg,<sup>143</sup> Nuruddin Muhammad Tarkhan, and Imam Abul Muhammad of Ghazni.<sup>144</sup> Farid Munajjim, the great astronomer who lived in Shahjahanpur during the reign, prepared an astral chart and named it *Zich-i-Shahjahani*.

Medicine was another important subject.<sup>146</sup> Akbar issued a *farman* that people should study medicine.<sup>147</sup> According to Badaoni, medicine<sup>148</sup> was cultivated and thought necessary. It appears that both *Ayurvedic* and *Unani* systems were taught side by side.<sup>149</sup> The most famous centre of education in medicine was at Sirhind.<sup>150</sup> Usually this profession was hereditary and those physicians whose forefathers had practised the art were very well in this profession. Some of the experienced physicians had opened private institutions for training students.<sup>151</sup> Some of them wrote books on this subject.<sup>152</sup> Education in surgery was abhorred by Hindus as the dissecting of limbs was considered to be inhuman. But the Muslims had no such aversion and they practised inoculation and performed operations. *Jarrah*s or surgeons, though not as skilled as their counterparts in Western countries, were nevertheless able to perform some remarkable operations and could provide artificial limbs.<sup>154</sup> Hindus of Calicut<sup>155</sup> were particularly well

in all branches of medicine and practised "the apothecary's art after the manner of Portuguese and Europeans."<sup>156</sup>

Veterinary science was not unknown. Though no regular teaching in this subject seems to have existed for the public, ancient books were available for guidance in the treatment of elephants and horses.<sup>157</sup> Shaikh Bina, son of Shaikh Hasan, was the most skilful surgeon of the time so far as the treatment of elephants was concerned.<sup>158</sup> *Raibari* was a class of Hindus well-acquainted with the treatment of camels. *Tatbya*<sup>159</sup> and *Tajri*<sup>160</sup> were the popular preventive measures adopted to avoid sickness among camels.<sup>161</sup>

Physics and chemistry were studied, but were regarded as a part of the science of mathematics.<sup>162</sup> People knew the uses of various metals and other chemical compounds. Belief in alchemy was universal in that age. Akbar is said to have learnt this so-called science from a *yogi*.<sup>163</sup> Hindus had a complete mastery over the science of meteorology and correctly foretold when the "wild clouds, winds and fighting occur."<sup>164</sup>

Philosophy, history, poetry, etc. were taught in schools and practised by the learned. Hindus, especially Brahmans, were interested in philosophy and mathematics, which were very ancient sciences in India. Abul Fazl mentions nine schools of Hindu philosophy.<sup>165</sup> History was a favourite subject of study with Muslims and it reached a high degree of excellence even when compared with contemporary Europe. Some of the ablest historians of all ages were born in this period. The names of Abul Fazl, Badaoni, Nizammuddin Ahmad, Abdul Hamid Lahori, Khafi Khan and a score of others illuminated this period.

Very little attention was paid to geography in schools and colleges. In fact this subject was almost excluded from the *dars*.<sup>166</sup> Aurangzeb heaped abuses on his tutor for wasting his time on the subtleties of Arabic metaphysics to the neglect of practical subjects, such as geography and politics. According to Bartolomeo, they had little desire to be acquainted with foreign countries as they considered their country to be the most beautiful and the happiest in the world.<sup>167</sup> People were ignorant about the geographical position of even the neighbouring countries. Roe was much surprised to know that no regular communication existed between India and China.<sup>168</sup>

Map-drawing was ignored altogether. A map of the globe was so rare a thing that Roe included it among the presents he offered to the governor of Surat.<sup>169</sup> But some of them had a good knowledge of the interior of the country. Humayun is said to have possessed a wide geographical knowledge.<sup>170</sup> The *Ain-i-Akbari* and *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh* give us detailed and accurate information about the different *subas* and cities of the empire. Talib of Isfahan presented Abul Fazl with a treatise on the wonders of Tibet. Abul Fazl included it in his *Akbarnama*.<sup>171</sup> A notable geographical work of the period was *Dosavali-Vivriti* by a Sanskrit scholar, Jagan Mohan. It deals with the geography of 56 countries, both old and new.

### Women's education

Women's education was not ignored in Mughal days. But it was confined to princesses and upper-class ladies. The society accorded an honourable place to educated women, some of whom rose to the high position of the king's advisers and counsellors by dint of sheer merit. Durgavati,<sup>172</sup> Chand Bibi,<sup>173</sup> Nur Jahan,<sup>174</sup> Jahanara,<sup>175</sup> Sahibji, the wife of Amir Khan,<sup>176</sup> and Tarabai<sup>177</sup> played important roles in Indian history. Mira Bai,<sup>178</sup> Gulbadan Begum,<sup>179</sup> Salima Sultana,<sup>180</sup> Rupmati,<sup>181</sup> Zeb-un-Nisa<sup>182</sup> and Zinat-un-Nisa<sup>183</sup> distinguished themselves in the literary sphere. A well-known work of the period entitled *Mahila-mriduvani* gives us a list of no less than 35 women all of importance, "not minor Indian poets but prophetesses who have left their mark on the literary sphere."<sup>184</sup> There were many other ladies of fame whose names can be seen in the *Poems by Indian Women* edited by Margaret Macnicol.<sup>185</sup> These distinguished names suggest the existence of a high level of education for women.

No regular separate schools seem to have existed for imparting education to girls,<sup>186</sup> who had their early lessons usually from their parents. Girls in their childhood attended schools along with boys, and learnt the *Quran* (if they were Muhammadans) and one or two other lessons by rote. The rich appointed tutors to teach their daughters at home. The author of *Qanun-i-Islam* speaks of girls being taught the *Quran* and elementary reading.<sup>187</sup> A Malayan work *Chandrotsavan* gives us an idea about the general reading of educated women

in the South and this includes *Sakuntalam*, *Malavikagnimitram* and other Sanskrit dramas.<sup>188</sup> There is no doubt about the literacy of high born and well-to-do women. The daughters of Rajput chiefs and of some Bengali *zamindars* were usually able to read and write. Special care was taken for the education of Mughal princesses,<sup>189</sup> almost all of whom daily read the *Quran* and occasionally corresponded<sup>190</sup> with their relatives. Some of them composed verses and were well-versed in music. The average Mughal princess received but a limited education.<sup>191</sup> Her regular studies came to an end with her marriage which usually took place at an early age. So the opportunities to acquire a mastery over the language were few. Later on she had no cultural or educational activities to keep up her interest in letters. Few specimens of letter-writing by Mughal princesses exist. The husband of Gulbadan did not even recognise his wife's handwriting. Her *Humayunnama*, according to Banerji, "abounds with spelling mistakes and clumsy sentences." Even the poems of Zeb-un-Nisa and Zinat-un-Nisa do not rise so high in poetic excellence as those of the contemporary male authors.

There is, however, little doubt about the literacy of the average middle-class woman who had sufficient knowledge of either Hindi, Persian or of the native provincial language to enable her to study scriptures. Mukundram, a 16th-century poet and author of the poem *Chandi Mangal*, throws light on the education of the average Hindu lady in those days. He relates how a middle-class lady found out a forged letter. She at once recognised that the writer was not the person by whom it purported to have been written.<sup>192</sup> The knowledge of Sanskrit was widespread in the south, and Vico in his letter of 1626 refers to a female neophyte who astonished him by the extent of her knowledge and the solidity of her judgment. She spoke Sanskrit with elegance and facility and cited appositely the best authors on the verses of the celebrated poets.<sup>193</sup> Special stress was laid on the education of widows, some of whom even became teachers—for instance, Hati Vidyalkara who migrated to Bihar from Bengal and became a teacher there.<sup>194</sup> We concur with the poet's concluding view :

"There is evidence to show that women belonging to the lower ranks of society, such as housemaids, were

illiterate, but there is nothing to discountenance female education."<sup>195</sup>

### Writing-paper

Paper was in common use in India long before the Mughal period.<sup>196</sup> Most of the manuscripts written during our period have flowery borders and the paper used is also of good quality.<sup>197</sup> Sialkot was famous for paper, especially *Man Singhi* and silk paper which "were good in texture, clear and durable." It was also used in the courts of Mughal emperors<sup>198</sup> for keeping records. The best quality of paper was manufactured at Shahzudpur and thence exported to other parts of the country.<sup>199</sup> Inscriptions and grants of land, etc. were written on metal plates for permanent preservation.<sup>200</sup>

Paper was seldom used in primary schools. Children either used wooden boards or the ground for writing on.<sup>201</sup> Sometimes the poor used palm-leaves<sup>202</sup> for writing letters. These leaves were "dressed, dried and then used as paper."<sup>203</sup> The innermost part of the palm-tree, which was plaited into about 50 or 60 folds,<sup>204</sup> served as paper. The letters were then folded and made round like a rod or ribbon.<sup>205</sup> Abul Fazl,<sup>206</sup> Pyrard,<sup>207</sup> and Thevenot<sup>208</sup> corroborate this. Some people of Kashmir, however, used instead of paper or palm-leaves *tuz*, that is, the bark of a tree worked into sheets.<sup>209</sup> According to Abul Fazl, most of their ancient manuscripts were written on this type of paper.

### Calligraphy

Printing<sup>210</sup> was not in vogue in India at that time ; so, books had to be written in manuscript by skilful calligraphists.<sup>211</sup> The pen called *persian qalam* was used. It was a piece of reed mended like a quill.<sup>212</sup> They used brass inkstands for holding the pens and the ink.<sup>213</sup> The rich used golden inkpots, but Aurangzeb ordered that men of literary taste should use china inkpots.<sup>214</sup> The poor employed iron pens for writing on palm-leaves "holding it with the clenched fist."<sup>215</sup> According to Pyrard, the people of Calicut wrote with "iron bodkins upon palm-leaves" when green.<sup>216</sup> No sooner did they get dry than it was impossible to "get the printed letters out of it."<sup>217</sup> A sharp iron instrument was used for writing on cocoa-leaves.<sup>218</sup>

The colour of the ink was usually black and sometimes white as these "colours best prevent any ambiguities in reading."<sup>219</sup> Kashmiris prepared such a fine ink that the letters once written could never be washed away.<sup>220</sup> Lead-pencils (*qalm-i-sarb*) were also not unknown.<sup>221</sup>

Penmanship was considered to be a fine art and good writers were given high salaries. Eight calligraphical systems were in vogue<sup>222</sup> and of these *Naskh* and *Nastaliq* were the most important. Babar introduced a new style called *Khat-i-Baburi*. He transcribed the *Quran* in that very script and sent it to Mecca.<sup>223</sup> Experts in each of the above systems were available in India.<sup>224</sup>

### Books, rare and costly

Being written by hand, books were naturally rare and costly. Every student could not be expected to have a copy of his own. Most of them depended upon libraries of which there were quite a large number. Some of them, especially students attending higher courses in Persian, possessed books besides the one in the custody of the teacher.<sup>225</sup>

We have little information about the actual price of the books included in the curriculum except what we can gather from the amount paid by the kings and nobles for certain precious manuscripts. It must be observed, however, that the rich decoration and binding, which were usual in the presentation copy intended for a rich patron, greatly enhanced the price of the book.<sup>226</sup> *Tuhfat-us-Salatin* by Mir Ali was purchased perhaps by Humayun for Rs. 2,500 as an inscription on the title-page shows. Nur Jahan purchased a *diwan* of Mirza Kamran for three *mohurs*.<sup>227</sup> Munim Khan paid Rs. 500 as a reward to Bahadur Khan who had sent him a present of the copy of *Kulliyat* (naturally richly bound and with illustrations and flowery borders) of Hazrat Shaikh Sadi in 976<sup>228</sup> A.H., and as is apparent the latter must have been paid by his rich patron a sum large enough to have no comparison with the actual cost of the book. Manrique and De Laet mention 24,000 richly bound and rare manuscripts in the Imperial Library and estimate their value at about Rs. 6,463,731,<sup>229</sup> that is, about Rs. 260 per book. These books were usually adorned with the paintings and illustrations so dear in these days.<sup>230</sup> Jahangir



would not have distributed books so liberally among the elite of Gujarat if they had been unprocurable.<sup>231</sup> It appears that ordinary books were available in the market at reasonable prices. Badaoni's remarks testify to this :

"There is no street or market (in the Imperial capital) in which the booksellers do not stand at road-sides selling copies of the *diwans* of these two poets (Urfi of Shiraz and Hussain Sanai) and both Persians and Indians buy them."<sup>232</sup>

We have little knowledge about the availability and the prices of Sanskrit books and manuscripts, but it is probable that a small number of copies of each work were either in individual hands or in possession of the institutions which quite naturally "rigidly guarded these treasures of knowledge by never permitting out the copies of the texts they taught." Mithila University had prohibited its students from taking away from its school any of the books or even notes of the lessons taught there. Vasudeva finding it impossible to get a copy of the work *Tatta Chintamani* and the metrical part of *Kusumanjali* anywhere risked his own life by committing to memory both the works while studying in Mithila, and then fleeing thence and reducing them to writing at Nadia.<sup>233</sup>

### Libraries

Quite a large number of libraries existed during the Mughal times. Every *madrassa* usually possessed a library big or small, attached to it. The big library attached to the *madrassa* at Ahmedabad, called *Sham-i-Burhani*, existed up to 980 A.H. when Akbar conquered Gujarat.<sup>234</sup> Wali or Dai's *madrassa* started at Ahmedabad in 1654 A.D., Madrasa Faiz Safa (founded in 1681 A.D.), Madrasa Hidayat Baksh (completed in 1699 A.D.) and another *madrassa* started by Shaikh Ibrahim at Kutiana in Kathiawar (1689 A.D.) possessed big libraries. Sultan Ahmad Khatwi built a mosque, a *khanqah*, a *madrassa* and a tank in Sarkahaiz in Ahmedabad, and a library was also housed in one of its apartments.<sup>235</sup> These libraries were meant for students and teaching staff, but there was nothing to prevent scholars known to the authorities from borrowing books. These libraries may be regarded as public libraries in that sense. The biggest of these libraries was the Imperial

Library. Though meant exclusively for royal use, scholars could have access to it.<sup>236</sup>

All the Mughal emperors<sup>237</sup> from Babar to Aurangzeb were men of literary taste and took keen interest in the development of the Imperial Library. They were very eager to collect and preserve rare books, and they valued presents of scholarly books from learned authors. Their examples were followed by nobles and courtiers, who had their own libraries.<sup>238</sup>

As in every other sphere, Akbar also introduced reforms in the management, classification and storage of books which had by that time increased enormously. He brought it to the level of efficiency which compares favourably with the modern standard of classification. The library was divided into different compartments according to the value of the books and the estimation in which the different sciences were held. They were further divided according to different languages in which they were written, such as Hindi, Persian, Greek, Kashmiri, Arabic, etc. Each section was subdivided into prose and poetry and the books were arranged accordingly.<sup>239</sup> The library was managed well and had experienced officers to supervise and direct its affairs. An officer called *nizam* was in charge of the library.<sup>240</sup> Next to him was the *muhtamim* or *darogha*.<sup>241</sup> The *nizam* had several assistants under him to "enter the books in the register and to keep separate registers for separate subjects and number the books." He was also responsible for the selection and purchase of books for the library. The people who were employed for the care, upkeep and correction of books, such as the scribe, *warraq shhaf*,<sup>242</sup> book-binders<sup>243</sup> and painters,<sup>244</sup> were masters of their art. Skilful copyists, *khushnavis*, gilders and cutters were always employed to do various specialists' jobs. *Jadwalsaz*'s duty was to make "plain, coloured, silvery, golden, original and artificial marginal drawings round the page." Translators were also kept on a permanent basis. They were usually well-versed in Arabic and Persian.<sup>245</sup> The books after being copied by scribes were sent to the *muqabalanavis* who compared the copy with the original and corrected mistakes.<sup>246</sup> The issue and restoration of each book was watched carefully and any defects immediately detected.<sup>247</sup>

Private libraries were common. Almost every learned

scholar or rich patron possessed a library of his own. The nobles vied with each other in adding rare books to their libraries. These manuscripts sometimes were bought at high prices.<sup>248</sup> Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan possessed a big personal library. The staff employed in its upkeep, preservation and management totalled ninety-five. It included a librarian, *khushnavis*, painters, book-binders, scribes and *warraq shhaf*, all kept in service on a permanent basis. The famous book-binder of Mashhad and inventor of *Abri* paper, Muhammad Amin Khurasani, was employed in this library on a salary of rupees four hundred per month. Most of the books in the Khan-i-Khanan's library were illustrated by a Hindu painter.<sup>249</sup> Many learned men and scholars used to come to the library for "study and self-improvement."<sup>250</sup> Shaikh Faizi had a grand library. It contained 4,600 books<sup>251</sup> which were either in "the handwriting of the author or had been written in the author's time." These books were on various subjects such as poetry, medicine, astronomy, music, philosophy, science, etc. Mahmud Gawan, *vizir* of Muhammad Shah Bahamani, left a huge library containing 35,000 volumes.<sup>252</sup>

Maharaja Chhika Deva Raya of Mysore (1672-1704) was an author of repute. He collected in his library the rarest Sanskrit and historical works which were unfortunately subsequently destroyed by Tipu Sultan.<sup>253</sup> Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh of Jaipur (fl. 1699-1743) possessed an unrivalled library containing all the astronomical treatises such as Ptolemy's *Almagest*, the astronomical tables of Ulug Beg, La Hire's *Tabulae Astronomical*, Flamsteed's *Historia*, *Coelestis Britannica*, also certain Western mathematical works such as Euclid's *Elements*, a treatise on plains and spherical trigonometry, and the construction of logarithms. It is impossible to give a detailed list of the books in his library as most of the books were destroyed after his death. However, it has been clearly recorded that he procured most of the books from Europe, besides those available in India.<sup>254</sup>

Hindus possessed big libraries at their famous seats of learning, such as Banaras, Tirhut, Mithila, Nadia, etc. These libraries stocked huge piles of rare authentic ancient works on philosophy, medicine, religion, history and many other sciences. According to Dr. Fryer, several libraries of Hindus were filled

with rare and precious Sanskrit manuscripts, "unfolding the mysteries of their religion."<sup>255</sup> When the traveller Bernier paid a visit to Banaras, Kavindra received him warmly in the University library.<sup>256</sup> Bernier saw there a large hall "entirely filled with such scripts."<sup>257</sup> Thevenot writes : "They have many ancient books all in verse of which they are great lovers."<sup>258</sup> These libraries were later on destroyed by the Muhammadans.<sup>259</sup> The Brahmins of Kashmir held a sufficient stock of books which they regularly studied.<sup>260</sup>

## NOTES

1. *History and Prospect of British Education in India* (1891), p. 1.
2. Besides *mathas* and Buddhist *viharas*, Jain *pallis* also played an important part in educating people.
3. For education in ancient times refer to R.K. Mookerji, *Ancient Indian Education* ; S.K. Das's *Educational System of Ancient Hindus* ; Dr. A.S. Altekar's *Education in Ancient India*. Also see *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 12, p. 167.
4. According to Apastamba, "The age of *upanayana* is to be seven when the objective is *Brahmavarchasa*, eight where it is *Ayu*, nine where it is *Teja* or physical vigour, ten where it is vital force, and 12 where it is increase of live-stock." Manu is nearer the truth when he fixes the age of five for a Brahman student whose aim is *Brahmavarchasa*.
5. Guru Nanak was sent to school at the age of seven. *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, p. 136. Padmavat began her studies at the age of five. *Padmavat*, Trans. Grierson, p. 26.
6. *A.N.*, I, p. 518 ; III, pp. 105-6, 922, 1122 ; Badaoni, II, p. 173. E. & D., V, p. 370.
7. Abul Fazl writes : "Humayun fixed an auspicious hour for the initiation of Akbar's instruction after consulting the renowned astrologers of the day." *A.N.*, I, pp. 271-72 ; Tr., I, p. 519.
8. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 312.

9. Mandelslo, p. 62.
10. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 312.
11. Bernier, p. 228 ; Manuel Godino in *J.R.A.S.B.*, Vol. Letters 1938, Art. No. 23, p. 546 ; *M.U.* (trans.), Vol. p. 546.
12. Mandelslo, p. 62.
13. Account of Sadiq confirmed by Della Valle, (ed. Ed. Grey), II, pp. 227-28.
14. R.S. Sathianathailer, *Tamilham in the 17th Century*, p. 177.
15. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 312.
16. Bartolomeo, p. 263.
17. *Dara Shukoh* by Dr. K.R. Kanungo, p. 5 ; *Impressos Gazetteer*, II, pp. 408-9.
18. Bartolomeo, p. 263. "Grammar was regarded as a channel for opening the highest gateway of culture including study of human life and of the mysteries of existence." *Indian Culture through the Ages* by S.V. Venkateswara, p. 235.
19. Badaoni, III, p. 28 ; Tr., III, p. 48 ; *Ibid*, II, Tr., p. 1. *Dara Shukoh*, p. 5.
20. *Humayun Badshah*, I, p. 4.
21. Hedges' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 106.
22. According to Bartolomeo the method of teaching in schools was as follows : (i) "The children were first taught the principles of writing and accounts; (ii) Sanskrit Grammar also called *Sarasvada* or the art of speech, elegance; (iii) The second part of this grammar which contains syntax or the book *Vyakarana*; (iv) Brahmavada dictionary called *Amarasinha* followed by *shalokas*, Then comes detailed and specialized study of various sciences as astrology, medicine, poetry, logic, etc." Bartolomeo, pp. 262-63.
23. See his remarks about the early education in the Prologue to the *Ramayana* of Tulsi Das by F.S. Growse in *A.S.B.* I, (1876), pp. 22-23.
24. Bernier, (1891), p. 335.
25. *Padmavat*, Trans., Grierson, p. 26.
26. Della Valle quoted in Wheeler's *History of India*, Vol. Pt. II, p. 486. Babar praises the Hindu manner

reckoning, and writes : "They have a very clear mode of calculation. They call a hundred thousand a *lakh*, a hundred *lakhs* a *crore*, a hundred *crore* an *arab*...." *B.N.*, Caldecott, pp. 188-89.

27. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, E. & D., IV, p. 311.
28. Bernier, (1891), pp. 335-36.
29. Leitner, *History of Indigenous Education in the Punjab*, p. 1 ; William Ward, *A View of the Hindus*, II, pp. 483 ff.
30. E. & D., VI, pp. 176-77.
31. 'Sahabia' by Jahanara Begum, article in *Oriental College Magazine*, Lahore, August 1937, Vol. XIII, No. 4, p. 11.
32. *Ancient Indian Education* by R.K. Mookerji, p. 202.
33. *John Marshall in India*, p. 386. According to Bartolomeo, a traveller to the Indies in the 18th century, "A schoolmaster in Malabar receives every two months from each of his pupils for the instruction given them two *Fanon* or *Panam*. Some do not pay in money but give him a certain quantity of rice . . . There are some teachers who instruct children without any fee and are paid by the overseers of the temples or by the chief of the caste." Bartolomeo, pp. 261-62.
34. Bartolomeo, p. 263.
35. See painting No. 3 in N.N. Law's *Promotion of Learning in India*. It shows Haqiqat Rai in the above-mentioned posture. See also *Imperial Gazetteer*, II, pp. 408-9.
36. Mirza Husain once saved the life of Ferishta respecting the latter's claims as a school-fellow. Storey, II, Fasc., III, pp. 443-44. Ferishta, Bombay Edition, II, p. 288.
37. Badaoni, III, p. 56 ; Tr., III, p. 93.
38. *Ibid.*
39. Bernier, (1891), p. 341. Classes were held in these private houses particularly in the gardens which the rich merchants and philanthropists had endowed upon the Brahmans, the greatest repository of knowledge and learning among Hindus. Badaoni, II, p. 267 ; Tr., II, p. 264.
40. *History of Banaras* by Dr. A.S. Altekar, pp. 39-41.
41. *Ain*, II, pp. 158-59 ; Tavernier, p. 160.
42. Bernier, (1891), pp. 341-42, also f.n. ; Tavernier, Vol. II,

- (1889), pp. 234-35.
43. Hamilton, II, pp. 22-23.
  44. *Ibid.*
  45. *Calcutta Monthly* for 1791. See also *History of Navya Nyaya* by Manmohan Chakravarti and Satis Chandra Vidyabhushana's *History of Indian Logic*.
  46. *Ancient Indian Education* by R.K. Mookerji, pp. 598-601.
  47. *J.U.P. Hist. Soc.*, Dec. 1943, Art. on "History of Raghunatha Mahadeva Ghati" by P.K. Gode, p. 76, and f.n. p. 78.
  48. *History of Mithila* by Manmohan Chakravarti and also see *History of Navya Nyaya*.
  49. Bertrand La Mission du Madura, III, quoted in *Tamilham in the 17th Century* by R. Sathianathailer, p. 177.
  50. *Ain*, II, pp. 152-53.
  51. In Goa probably. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 384.
  52. Hamilton, I, p. 127.
  53. *M.A. of Saqi, E. & D.*, VII, p. 184.
  54. *Ibid.*
  55. Monserrate, p. 102. For universities in ancient India with special reference to Ayurvedic studies, see, *J.U.P. Historical Society*, July 1942, Vol. XV, Pt. I, pp. 12-43. Article by Radha Kumud Mookerji.
  56. *Al Minhaj*, p. 3.
  57. Jan Jahan Khan MS. in A.S.B., quoted in N.N. Law, p. 175.
  58. For Akbar's college at Agra see Keay's *Ancient Indian Education*, p. 119. Akbar is said to have invited a scholar from Shiraz Chalpi Beg to teach there (Abul Hasan Nadvi: *Hindustan ki Qadimi Islami Darsgahen*, p. 29). No remains of this *madrassa* are found excepting that the locality in which it was situated is still known as Madrasa Mohalla. For Shahjahan's college see *Asar-us-Sanadid* by Sir Sayyid, p. 69. It appears Shahjahan only repaired the old college of Akbar. Jahanara also built a *madrassa* attached to Jama Masjid.
  59. His school was known as *Madrassa-i-Khas*. Badaoni, II, pp. 55-56; Tr., II, p. 53.
  60. He was a well-known teacher. Badaoni, III, p. 78; Tr.,

III, p. 124.

61. According to Badaoni a school was founded after his name. Badaoni, III, p. 129 ; Tr., III, p. 181.
62. *T.A.*, II, Trans., B. De., pp. 694-95, Sayyid Ahmad in his *Tarikh-i-Agra* (p. 120), mentions a *Madrassa-i-Shahi* of which no trace remains except a *masjid* called *Masjid-i-Shahi*.
63. *Badaoni*, III, p. 119 ; Tr., III, pp. 174-75.
64. *Ibid*, pp. 156-57 ; Tr., III, p. 218.
65. Petermundry, II, p. 208.
66. Khwaja Muin was the founder of a *madrassa* where Mirza Mufliis used to teach. *T.A.*, II, (trans.), p. 686. For reference to another college see Badaoni, III, p. 130 ; Tr., III, p. 188. For Shahjahan's imperial college at Delhi, refer to Nadvi, *Hindustan ki Qadimi Islami Dars-gahen*, p. 23.
67. Badaoni, I, p. 471 ; Tr., I, p. 471 ; Maulana Ismail was a teacher there ; *Ain*, I, p. 607.
68. It bears an inscription ending with

ولی شد ساعی این دفعہ خیر شہاب الدین احمد خان بادل زہ  
خیریت این منزل خیر کہ شد تاریخ او خیر الہامان

For a photo of her *madrassa* see *Promotion of Learning in India*, p. 166. Also see the *Archaeology and Monumental Remains of Delhi* by Carr Stephen (1876), p. 199. Banerji has refuted Brown's view that the *madrassa* was intended for girls. According to him, the Muslim girls in medieval times did not move outside the house. The walls were erected to let the students continue their studies undisturbed by external noise. S.K. Banerji's article entitled "The Historical Remains of Early Years of Akbar's Reign" in the *J.U.P. Historical Society*, December, 1942, Vol. XV, Pt. II.

69. Badaoni, II, p. 60 ; Tr., II, p. 62.
70. *Hindustan ki Qadimi Islami Dars-gahen* by Abul Hasan Nadvi, p. 22.
71. Badaoni, I, p. 324 ; Tr., I, p. 427 ; III, pp. 77, 111 ; Tr., III, pp. 124 and 165.
72. Nadvi, *op. cit.*, p. 23 ; Carr Stephen's *Archaeological Remains of Delhi*, p. 255 ; Sayyid Ahmad, *Asar-us-Sanadid*,



- (1900), Vol. III, p. 12 ; A. A. A. Fyzee, *Islamic Studies in India*, 1957, pp. 202-3 ; For *Madrassa Ghazi-ud-Din* built during the reign of Ahmad Shah and Alamgir II, refer to Sayyid Ahmad, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 31.
73. See Badaoni, III (Trans. Haig). Index page 534 under *Tabqat* under Lahore.
  74. *T.A.*, Tr., II, p. 696.
  75. *Storia*, II, p. 424 ; Nadvi, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-42.
  76. *Tazkirat-ul-Ulema*, MS., in A.S.B., leaf ; 310 quote N.N. Law, p. 103, Faruki's *Aurangzeb*, p. 312.
  77. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 91.
  78. Ghani II, pp. 38-39.
  79. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, *Calcutta Review*, Oct. 1940, p. 311.
  80. Now it is called *Bara Imam ka Kotla*.
  81. Bulletin of Deccan College of Research Institute, Vol. I, June 1941, p. 383 ; *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Vol. I, p. 363.
  82. *History of Shahjahan* by Saksena, p. 208. According to the same author, Kalim and Qudsi took residence in the province to verify *Padshahnama*. Mulla Fani belonged to Kasganj and Khwaja Khudavand Muhammad settled in that province.
  83. *Oriental College Magazine*, Lahore, August 1937, No. 4.
  84. Storey, II, Fasc. III, p. 572.
  85. *A.N.*, II, p. 365 ; Tr., II, p. 531.
  86. Nadvi, *op. cit.*, p. 31.
  87. Badaoni, III, p. 108 ; Tr., III, p. 160.
  88. Mulla Nizam-ud-Din, originator of *Dars-i-Nizami*, taught here. For details refer to *Middle East Journal*, 1954, 168-69 ; *Al Minhaj*, p. 67.
  89. Nadvi, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-57.
  90. *Al Minhaj*, p. 52.
  91. Hamilton (New Edition), I, pp. 365-66.
  92. During Akbar's time Muhammad Gaus Gwaliori built a monastery there and "busied himself completely in instructing his students." Badaoni (Trans.), III, p. 103.
  93. Sarkar's *India of Aurangzib*, p. 98. In one of its *madrasas* was employed the great Arabic scholar Abdulla Hakim. Students came even from foreign countries to study under him. Nadvi, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-27.

94. For a *madrassa* built by Dara Shukoh near *dargah* Shaikh Cheli at Thanesar in 1661 A.D., refer to Nadvi, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-28.
95. Bernier, (1891), p. 334. The period of studentship was normally fixed at 12 years. See also R.K. Mookerji's *Ancient Indian Education*, p. 92.
96. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, London Institute, Vol. IV, pp. 305-6.
97. *Ibid.* He was born in the second half of the 17th century.
98. *Hindi Shabd Sagar*, Vol. I, p. 79 ; *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, p. 176.
99. *Tazkirah-i-Shustar*, p. VIII.
100. *Ancient Indian Education*, p. 598. See *History of Navya Nyaya* and *History of Mithila* by Man Mohan Chakravarti.
101. Badaoni, III, p. 27 ; Tr., III, p. 45.
102. *Ibid.*, p. 142 ; Tr. III, p. 200.
103. *Ibid.*, p. 119 ; Tr. III, p. 176.
104. *Education in Ancient India* by Dr. Altekar, pp. 292-93.
105. *Ancient Indian Education*, pp. 599-601.
106. *History of Classical Sanskrit Literature* by M. Krishnamacharya, p. 109.
107. *History of Classical Sanskrit Literature*, p. 110.
108. *J.U.P. Hist. Soc.*, Dec. 1943, Art. on "History of Raghunatha Mahadeva Ghata" by P.K. Gode, p. 78.
109. *Oriental College Magazine*, Lahore, August 1937, Vol. XIII, No. 4, p. 8.
110. Badaoni, III, p. 118 ; Tr. III, p. 173.
111. *Ibid.*, p. 148 ; Tr., III, p. 209.
112. E. & D., VI, p. 116.
113. *Ain*, I, (1939), p. 651.
114. Badaoni, III, p. 75 ; Tr., III, p. 121. Many other famous writers have been mentioned by Badaoni who took their post-collegiate studies under renowned teachers.
115. *Islamic Culture*, XIII, Pt. IV, p. 413.
116. Badaoni, III, pp. 119 and 142 ; Tr., III, pp. 176 and 200 ; E. & D., VI, pp. 176-77 ; *Islamic Culture*, XIII, No. 4, p. 418 ; *Oriental College Magazine*, Lahore, August 1937, p. 8. Also see *Tazkirah-i-Shustar*, Calcutta 1924. Sometimes foreign scholars came to India for studies ; Badaoni, III, p. 76 ; Tr., III, p. 122.

117. Refer to Nobiali's letter of 1627 (*Bertrand La Madura*, II, p. 263) in which he refers to a Kammalan who participated in a religious disputation with a facility, eloquence and strength of reasoning that disconcerted the most learned. *Tamilham in the 17th Century*, *op. cit.*, p. 178.
118. Son of Govinda Diksita, Minister to Acyutappa who translated the *Pancanada-Mahatmya* in 1605. He flourished between 1615 and 1645.
119. *Ibid.*
120. *Dig. Vijaya*, VI, 17. *Karnatika Hist. Review*, V, Pt. II, July 1938, pp. 23-24.
121. *Ancient Indian Education* by R.K. Mookerji, p. 600.
122. *Ibid.*
123. Badaoni, III, p. 119 ; Tr., III, p. 176.
124. *Ibid.*, p. 154 ; Tr., III, p. 215.
125. *Ibid.*, pp. 113 and 129 ; Tr., III, pp. 167 and 187.
126. *Ain*, I, pp. 288-89.
127. *Ibid.*
128. Badaoni, III, p. 155 ; Tr., III, p. 216 ; and also see p. 232.
129. MS., Khuda Baksh Library, Patna.
130. Bartolomeo gives an exaggerated account of the courses of study followed in 1796. Bartolomeo, pp. 263-64.
131. S.R. Sharma's *Bibliography of Mughal India*, p. 158.
132. *Indian Culture through the Ages* by S.V. Venkateswara, p. 235.
133. Badaoni, II, p. 363 ; Tr., II, p. 475.
134. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 442.
135. Pyrard, II, p. 250 ; Tavernier, II, pp. 161-62 ; Thevenot, Chap. XXXVIII ; Ovington, p. 280 ; *India in Portuguese Literature*, p. 121.
136. Khwaja Amir-ud-din Mahmud of Herat (*A.N.*, I, p. 449), Mulla Nur-ud-din Mohammad-i-Tarkhan *alias* Nuri (Badaoni, III, pp. 197-99 Tr., III, pp. 273-75), Fatehullah of Shiraz (Badaoni, II, p. 315 ; Tr., II, p. 325) and Hafiz Muhammad Khiyab were famous mathematicians. Ataullah wrote a treatise on mensuration and algebra (Reiu add 16744).
137. For Humayun's interest in astronomy, see *Humayun Badshah*, II, p. 353.
138. Badaoni, II, p. 307 ; Tr., II, p. 316.

139. *Ain*, I, (1939), pp. 288-89 ; Badaoni, II, p. 307 ; Tr., II, p. 316.
140. Pyrard, II, p. 250 : Pelsaert's *India*, p. 77 ; Hamilton, I, p. 276 ; Ovington, p. 351 ; and *Ain*, II, pp. 351-52.
141. Pelsaert's *India*, p. 77.
142. *Ain*, I, p. 442n.
143. Badaoni, III, pp. 224-27 ; Tr. III, pp. 310-15.
144. *A.N.*, II, p. 6 ; Tr., II, p. 11.
145. *Tabqat-i-Shahjahani*, B.M. (Or. 1673), f. p. 320 b.
146. *Ain*, I, pp. 288-89.
147. Badaoni, II, p. 363 ; Tr., II, p. 375.
148. *Ibid.*
149. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 315. He thinks chemists' shops were no better than perfumery stores.
150. Monserrate, p. 102.
151. Badaoni, III, pp. 161-62 ; Tr., III, pp. 224-25 ; *Ibid.*, pp. 167-68 ; Tr., III, pp. 234-35 ; E. & D., II, p. 2.
152. Badaoni, III, pp. 167-68 ; Tr., III, pp. 234-35 ; Bernier, p. 335.
153. Elphinstone, I (MXCCCXLIII), p. 280. Elphinstone remarks : "Their surgery is as remarkable as their medicine especially when we recollect their ignorance of anatomy. They cut for the stone, conched for the cataract and extracted the foetus from the womb and in their early work enumerate no less than 127 sorts of surgical works." *Ibid.*
154. *Storia*, II, p. 301.
155. Ovington, p. 351.
156. Pyrard, I, p. 377.
157. *Gayshastra* and *Salhotra* deal with the diseases of the elephants and horses respectively. *Ain*, III, pp. 271-79. It is said that there was hardly any wild bird, strange beast, or reptiles, a specimen of which was not kept by Faizullah Khan Faujdar of Moradabad in Aurangzeb's reign. *Maasir-ul-Umra* (trans.), Vol. I, p. 513.
158. Badaoni, III, p. 170 ; Tr., III, pp. 237-38.
159. Oiling of camels as anointing.
160. Injecting oil into their nostrils.
161. *Ain*, I, (1939), pp. 154-55.
162. *Ain*, pp. 42-43,

163. Badaoni, too, relates a story that certain Shaikh Nasir-ud-din turned all the copper utensils into gold when Humayun was in great straits after his defeat at Chausa. The chemical used was given to the Shaikh by a certain yogi; it is related. Badaoni, I, p. 109 ; Tr., I, pp. 161-62.
164. *John Marshall in India*, p. 233. Pelsaert's *India*, p. 77.
165. *Ain*, III, p. 127, Thevenot, III, Chap. XXXVIII.
166. Bartolomeo, pp. 265-66.
167. *Ibid.*
168. Roe's *Embassy*, p. 63.
169. *Ibid.* Tavernier, however, observed that the Brahmin teacher of Jai Singh's sons had two globes of the world which the Dutch had presented to him. Tavernier, *Travels in India*, Vol. III (1889), London, pp. 234-35.
170. Ferishta, II, p. 530 ; Briggs II, p. 178 ; Manucci's (Vol. II, p. 51) story that once Humayun enquired from Sidi Ali Reis whether Turkey was larger than India, seems to be pure imagination.
171. Badaoni, III, p. 265 ; Tr., III, p. 369.
172. *A.N.*, II, pp. 324-25 ; E. & D., V, p. 169.
173. Ferishta, III, p. 312.
174. Beni Prasad's *Jahangir*, pp. 182-85.
175. Oriental College Magazine, Lahore, Vol. XIII, No. 4, August 1937.
176. *Studies in Mughal India* by J.N. Sarkar, pp. 111-18.
177. Sarkar, V, pp. 199-201 ; K.K., II, 469-516.
178. Mira Bai, the sweet singer of Rajputana, is, according to J.C. Ghosh, "the best woman poet of India before the 19th century." *The Legacy of India* by Garatt, p. 383. Her Radha Krishna lyrics in Braj are very famous. *Religious Literature of India*, p. 306.
179. Author of *Humayunnama*.
180. Badaoni, II, p. 377 ; Tr., II, p. 389.
181. Romantic wife of Baz Bahadur, ruler of Malwa, during Akbar's time. She was a poetess and composed sweet verses. In this connection see an interesting book on Rupmati, *Lady of the Lotus*, by Ahmad-ul-Umar, tran. L.M. Crump.
182. Daughter of Aurangzeb, pen-name 'Zeb', author of *Diwan*

- Makhfi*. B.O.R.S., Jan., 1927. *Studies in Mughal India*, pp. 70-90.
183. Daughter of Aurangzeb. She was also a poetess.
  184. *Bulletin of School of Oriental Studies*, I (1917).
  185. *Poems by Indian Women* edited by Margaret Macnicol (Heritage of India Series), pp. 24, 26, 30, 32.
  186. In the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, there is, however, a painting showing "A Zenana School in the Deccan" (late 17th century). *A History of India* by J.C. Powell-Price, Plate 41, facing page 281.
  187. *Qanun-i-Islam*, ed. Crookes, p. 51. For a painting showing a Mughal princess taking her lesson see *Promotion of Learning in India*, p. 206, Plate I.
  188. This work was compiled in the 15th century.
  189. *Qanun-i-Islam*, ed. Crookes, p. 51.
  190. *H.N.G.* (Bev.), p. 150,
  191. R. & B., II, p. 277 ; E.& D., VII, p. 162 ; *Islamic Culture*, July 1937.
  192. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 180.
  193. *Bertrand La Mission du Madura*, II, p. 257, quoted in *Tamilham in the 17th Century*, *op. cit.*, p. 178.
  194. Keay's *Indian Education*, p. 77.
  195. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 180.
  196. *The Antiquity of Writing in India* by Bishnu Swarup, J.B.O.R.S., Vol. VIII, Pt. I, pp. 45-57.
  197. See manuscripts in Khuda Baksh Library, Patna ; and the Punjab University, Lahore.
  198. *India of Aurangzib*, p. 95.
  199. Petermundy, II, p. 98.
  200. *Storia* III, p. 112.
  201. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 312. Della Valle quoted in Wheeler's *History of India*, Vol. IV, Pt. II, p. 486.
  202. Thevenot, III, Chap. I, p. 90 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, pp. 185-86.
  203. Linschoten, II, p. 50.
  204. *Ibid.*
  205. Thevenot, III, Chap. I, p. 90.
  206. *Ain*, II, p. 126.
  207. Pyrard, II, p. 408.

208. Thevenot, III, Chap, I, p. 88.
209. *Ain*, II, p. 351. Babar refers to paper made of 'tar' (*B.N.*, p. 510).
210. The earliest Indian printing was done by the Jesuits in presses at Goa and Rachol, about the middle of the 16th century. Smith's *Akbar*, pp. 424-25.
211. It was impossible to cut satisfactory types of Persian and Arabic alphabets many a decade after its adoption in India in the 16th century. The best Persian and Arabic types cannot stand comparison with the beautiful calligraphy of the Mughal Persian manuscripts. Smith's *Akbar*, pp. 424-25.
212. Ovington, p. 249.
213. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 442.
214. *M.A.*, Trans. (Urdu), p. 111.
215. *Ain*, II, p. 126.
216. Pyrard, I, p. 408.
217. Linschoten, II, p. 50.
218. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, pp. 185-86.
219. *Ain*, I, p. 105.
220. *Ain*, II, p. 351.
221. For reference to the use of lead pencils (*qalm-i-sarb*) see *Maasir*, I, pp. 256-57.
222. *Ain*, I, pp. 105-08.
223. Badaoni, I, p. 343 ; Tr., I, p. 450.
224. Badaoni, III, p. 273 ; Tr., III, p. 378 ; *Ain*, I, p. 107 ; Badaoni, III, p. 181-82 ; Tr., III, p. 254-55 ; *T.A.*, II, p. 658. *Tuzuk*, Lowe, p. 76. *Tazkira-Khushnavisan-i-Hind*, pp. 57 and 125.
225. Badaoni relates that when a certain student came to Shaikh Bhikan (certainly with a book) to set him a task, the Shaikh replied: "Better read some work on divinity." Badaoni, III, p. 148, Tr., III, p. 209. No less than 101 copies of a book like *Nal wa Daman* were still left in Faizi's library after distribution. It shows the large number of books transcribed. (Badaoni, III, p. 306). Also refer to Macauliffe, I, p. 163.
226. The huge amount spent by Aurangzeb to decorate a set of the *Quran* to be sent to Mecca may well serve as an example. *M.A.* (Urdu), pp. 388-89.

227. MSS. of Diwan-i-Kamran, Khuda Baksh Library, Patna.
228. *Islamic Culture*, Oct. 1945, p. 343.
229. See "The Treasury of Akbar," *J.R.A.S.*, April 1915, Mandelslo, p. 37.
230. Jahangir purchased a copy of *Yusuf-Zulaikha*, evidently a book with paintings and illustrations, for 1000 gold mohrs. Copy in Bankipore Library, another copy in Shantiniketan. "From notes and calculations I have made, miniatures by Bihzad were worth hundreds of pounds each and certain of his manuscripts were worth ten times than now." Martin, Vol. I, p. 58.
231. R. & B., I, pp. 439-40.
232. Badaoni, III, p. 285 ; Tr., III, p. 393.
233. *Ancient Indian Education* by R.K. Mookerji, pp. 597-600.
234. *Zafr-ul-Walih*, V, I, p. 32. *Islamic Culture*, October 1945, p. 339.
235. *Tuhfat-ul-Majalis*, MS., section 38.
236. See Badaoni, II, p. 377 ; Tr., II, p. 389.
237. For Babar : *B.N.*, p. 460 ; *H.N.*, Gul (Beveridge), p. 76. For Humayun ; *Tazkirat-ul-Waqyat* (Stewart) p. 107 ; *H.N.*, Gul (Beveridge), p. 154 ; *A.N.*, I, pp. 309-10 ; *A.N.* II, p. 442 ; Von Noer's *Kaiser Akbar* I, p. 136 ; Elphinstone, II, (MDCCCXLIII), pp. 126-27. For a photograph of his library see *Promotion of Learning in India* opposite p. 133. For Salima Sultana's Library see *Archaeology and monumental Remains of Delhi*, pp. 139-40. For Akbar : *Ain*, I, pp. 110-12 ; *A.N.*, I, p. 94 ; Tr. p. 290 ; II, p. 202 ; Tr., II, p. 205 ; Badaoni, II, p. 319 ; Tr., II, p. 328 ; III, p. 305 ; Tr., III, p. 421 ; E. & D., V, p. 519 ; Mandelslo, p. 37 ; Smith's *Akbar*, p. 424 ; Mellson's *Akbar*, p. 169 ; *Tarikh-i-Agra*, p. 75. For Jahangir : R. & B., I, pp. 439-40 ; *Waqyat-i-Jahangiri*, E. & D., VI, p. 360 ; E. & D., VII, p. 74. For Shahjahan : *Shahjahannama*, II, p. 505 ; *Journal Islamic Culture*, October 1945. For Aurangzeb : *M.A.*, (Trans. Talab), pp. 387, 394 ; Fergusson's *Architecture at Bijapur*, p. 75. For Zeb-un-Nisa's library see *M.A.*, (Trans. Talab), p. 394 ; *B.O.R.S.*, Jan., 1927, art. on Zeb-un-Nisa ; *Diwan of Zeb-un-Nisa* by Magan Lall (Wisdom of the East series), Introduction.
238. Badaoni, III, p. 305 ; Tr. III, p. 421 ; E. & D., V, pp. 548-



- 49 ; *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, III, p. 1696 ; *Maarif*, Vol. XIV, *Islamic Culture*, October 1945.
239. *Ain*, I, p. 110.
240. *Shahjahannama*, II, p. p. 505, in *Islamic Culture*, January 1946, p. 18.
241. *Ibid*. Mir Baqi was appointed *daroga* in Khan-i-Khanan's library. *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, III, p. 1680.
242. Their duty was to clean the books.
243. *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, III, p. 1680.
244. *Ibid*, p. 1682.
245. See *Maarif*, Vol. XIV.
246. *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, III, p. 1696.
247. Badaoni, II, p. 376 ; Tr., II, p. 389.
248. *Martin in Miniature Painting and Painters of Persia, India and Turkey*, Vol. I, p. 58.
249. See Sayyid Sulaiman's article in *Islamic Culture*, p. 426, entitled "Literary Progress of the Hindus under Muslim Rule."
250. *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, MS. in A.S.B., Leaf 407.
251. The books were on literature, medicine, astronomy, music, philosophy, *tasauwuf*, science, mathematics, commentary, jurisprudence, *Hadis*, etc. (*Ibid*). E. & D., V, pp. 548-49 ; Badaoni, III, p. 305 ; Tr., p. 421.
252. Nadvi, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-61.
253. *Poems by Indian Women*, edited by Marcinol Margaret, Heritage of India Series, p. 26.
254. *Astronomical Observatories of Jai Singh* by G. Kaye. It is said that Jai Singh's son Jagat Singh gave this valuable library to a courtesan and it was thus destroyed and its books distributed among her 'base relations.'
255. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 392.
256. "Bernier and Kavindracharya at the Mughal Court," Oriental Institute of Research, December 1945.
257. Bernier, p. 335.
258. Thevenot, III, Chap. I, p. 90.
259. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 392.
260. *Iqbalnama*, Tr. (Urdu), p. 107.

## CHAPTER 7

# Customs, Rites and Ceremonies

### PRE-NUPTIAL CEREMONIES

#### General

The purificatory rites of a Hindu begin before his birth.<sup>1</sup> Of the sixteen principal ceremonies<sup>2</sup> prescribed by Hindu law-givers for a person, only six important ones,<sup>3</sup> viz., *Jatakarma* (birth ceremony), *Namakarana* (name-giving ceremony), *Chudakarana* (hair-cutting ceremony), *Upanayana* (initiation) and *Vivaha* (marriage), and certain obituary rites<sup>4</sup> are observed by the majority of the Hindus. The observance of these rites differs in various parts of this country in details only, the fundamental principles being the same everywhere.

Few references to these ceremonies are traceable in the contemporary records of the period.<sup>5</sup> Not unexpectedly, foreign travellers, who could not have an access to the inner apartments, are silent about these domestic rites excepting, of course, the marriage ceremony which was celebrated with all possible pomp and show. However, from the few and scattered references here and there in the works of the contemporary Persian chroniclers of the period as well as in the accounts of the foreign travellers, we may safely conclude that these ceremonies must have been observed in much the same manner in Mughal times as they are today.<sup>6</sup>

#### Birth ceremonies

Abul Fazl describes the birth ceremony<sup>7</sup> when honey stirred in *ghee* is put into the mouth (of the infant) by means of a gold ring.<sup>8</sup> In Bengal the womenfolk would pour down and shower grains of paddy and tufts of green grass on the head of the new-born, praying for its long life.<sup>9</sup> Tulsidas and Surdas refer

to the performance of *Nandimukh Shraddha*<sup>10</sup> just after the birth when offerings of gold, cows, plate and jewels were made to the Brahmans.<sup>11</sup> A cord made of *durba*<sup>12</sup> grass interwoven with mango-leaves was usually hung over the main door as a mark of festivity. It was the usual practice in the well-to-do families, as it is now, to celebrate the birth anniversary when a knot was added to the silk thread till the formal ceremony of *Upanayana* took place.<sup>13</sup> The horoscope of the child was invariably got prepared soon after its birth.<sup>14</sup>

Ovington describes at some length the *Namakarana Samskara*.<sup>15</sup> Usually the child was named<sup>16</sup> after the expiry of the period of confinement lasting forty days.<sup>17</sup> Fryer corroborates it.<sup>18</sup> Surdas refers to the practice of putting a *tilak* on the child's forehead after mixing curd, milk and *haldi*.<sup>19</sup> The custom of ascertaining on this occasion the natural bent of the child by placing several articles such as paddy, fried rice, clod of earth, gold, silver, etc. before it and inducing it to choose any one of them was also observed particularly in Bengal.<sup>20</sup>

Jayasi<sup>21</sup> as well as Surdas<sup>22</sup> refers to some ceremonies observed on the sixth day after birth. But it appears that they were in vogue among rich families only. Surdas writes that on this occasion "the gardener's wife offers a garland of flowers while the goldsmith presents a necklace studded with diamonds and pearls. The barber's wife applies *mahur* of nine colours on the feet of the mother while the carpenter's wife brings a cradle made of sandal-wood for the newly born."<sup>23</sup>

### *Annaprasana*

Surdas describes the ceremony of *Annaprasana* when solid food was given for the first time to the infant.<sup>24</sup> The ceremony, it appears, was usually performed six months after the birth of the child when relatives, friends and neighbours would assemble. *Khira*, honey and *ghee*, according to the poet Surdas,<sup>25</sup> would be placed before the child whose father helped him to taste them after due ceremonies.<sup>26</sup>

### **Hair-cutting ceremony**

The hair-cutting or *Mundan* ceremony was celebrated with the customary rites not earlier than the age of three, leaving one lock on the top of the head.<sup>27</sup> The ears of the child were also

bored usually on that day.<sup>28</sup> Surdas describes the *Karnavedha*<sup>29</sup> ceremony of Shree Krishna who was fondled with a *puri* and a piece of gur while his ears were being pierced.<sup>30</sup>

### *Upanayana*

The important ceremony of the "Sacred Thread" or *Upanayana* attracted the attention of many contemporary writers who present a fairly accurate account of its observance during Mughal days. Emperor Jahangir, while describing the four modes of a Brahman's life, refers to this ceremony<sup>31</sup> which has been the exclusive privilege of the three higher castes.<sup>32</sup> He fixes the age for the *Upanayanam* as prior to eight years<sup>33</sup> when a special function was held, and a large number of Brahmans were invited.<sup>34</sup> A cord of *munja* grass<sup>35</sup> or of cotton,<sup>36</sup> usually  $2\frac{1}{4}$  yards long, according to Jahangir, was made into three strings to be tied round the waist of the boy after reciting certain prayers over it.<sup>37</sup> The sacred thread,<sup>38</sup> consisting of three threads, each composed of three finer threads intertwined into one and costing about four *damris*,<sup>39</sup> was then hung on the left shoulder of the boy, the ends tied round the right arm.<sup>40</sup> Abul Fazl wrongly puts its length to be 26 times the circumference of the fist.<sup>41</sup> Its length is usually ninety-six times the breadth of the four fingers of a man, which is equal to his height.<sup>42</sup> The three threads represent the Trinity, the Hindu gods, Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh,<sup>43</sup> and the white colour signifies purity.<sup>44</sup> The curious reader may refer to *Hindu Samskaras* by R.B. Pandey for details.

### **School-going ceremony**

Being thus invested with the sacred thread, the boy began his studies<sup>45</sup> in right earnest under some teacher. Surdas refers to the practice of being initiated to a *mantra* (*Gayatri*) from the *Guru* before commencing studies. Brahmans were offered presents and the poor were given alms.<sup>46</sup> Phillips in his *Account of the Religion, Manners and Learning of the People of Malabar* gives a detailed account of the customs followed by the Hindus while putting their sons to school.<sup>47</sup> On an auspicious day fixed after consultation with an astrologer, the boy's parents would invite the school-teacher and all his pupils to their home where, after some ceremonies had been gone

through. the teacher wrote down some letters of alphabet on a leaf perfumed with incense and sprinkled over with *cucum* rose water. It was taken round to be touched and blessed by those present. After the boy had repeated these letters after the teacher, he prostrated and made obeisance before the gods, sweetmeats were distributed among those assembled. The teacher and his pupils were served with rice, and some presents were offered to the former.<sup>48</sup> The ceremony of *Samavartana* was performed when the student returned home after the completion of his studies.<sup>49</sup>

### Desire for a male child among Muslims

The craving for a male offspring was quite intense in Muhammadan<sup>50</sup> who often employed various devices to achieve that end.<sup>51</sup> Even Emperor Akbar did not hesitate to take a vow of undertaking an arduous journey to Ajmer, the shrine of Khwaja Muin-ud-din Chishti, if he was blessed with a son. Babar was equally anxious to have male children. Just before the birth of Hindal, the Emperor inscribed two papers, one with a boy's name and the other with that of a girl. He enclosed them in clay he set them in water. The name first revealed was the Emperor's joy, was that of a boy.<sup>53</sup> Only the ladies of the seraglio would celebrate the birth of a princess while the whole court and even the Empire took part in the jubilation if a prince was born.<sup>54</sup> Manucci relates in detail the rejoicing which followed the birth of a son in a rich family.<sup>55</sup>

### Muslim ceremonies

Of the numerous ceremonies and rituals which now attend a Muhammadan's birth, only *Aqiqah*<sup>56</sup> has been enjoined upon by Prophet Muhammad. The other important rituals,<sup>57</sup> such as the naming ceremony, *Bismillah* (initiation),<sup>58</sup> *Sunnat* (circumcision),<sup>59</sup> etc. owe their origin either to the "Traditions" or other Muhammadan works on ethics. Many more<sup>60</sup> have been added, especially in India, through the influence of local customs, prejudices and superstitions. These ceremonies vary from country to country and in India from province to province but there is general agreement in the number of the main observances everywhere.

### Custom of cord-cutting

No connected account has been left of the customs and superstitions that attended a child's birth in Mughal days.

can, however, form an idea of these from the stray references found here and there. For instance, on pregnancy, it was thought to be a good augury to change the residence; Salim's mother was sent from Agra to Shaikh's house at Fatehpur Sikri.<sup>61</sup> Manucci relates the peculiar custom of cord-cutting<sup>62</sup> followed in the royal family.<sup>63</sup> The cord was severed by means of a thread and put in a small bag which was kept under the child's pillow with certain cabalistic writings on the bag for forty days.<sup>64</sup>

### Ceremonies at birth

It was customary to pour honey into the infant's mouth<sup>65</sup> immediately after birth and to press his mother's breast so that "a drop of milk comes out."<sup>66</sup> *Azan* or the Muslim call to prayer was sounded in the ears of the infant.<sup>67</sup> Akbar not only followed the Hindu mode of preparing horoscopes<sup>68</sup> (on the birth of his sons and grandsons) but also postponed his visit to Fatehpur to see his new-born son, Salim, in deference to a belief prevalent among the Hindus that "whenever God, after long expectation, has bestowed an auspicious child, he be not produced before the honoured father till after a long delay."<sup>69</sup> There is sufficient evidence to corroborate the fact that Muslims generally followed the Hindu practice of preparing the horoscope of the newly born child.<sup>69\*</sup>

### Naming ceremony

The naming ceremony of a child was usually performed on the day of his birth<sup>70</sup> when the grandfather would give the name.<sup>71</sup> Akbar was named Badr-ud-din immediately after his birth.<sup>72</sup> John Marshall, who visited Bengal in 1688 A.D., writes in detail about the ceremonies connected with the birth of a child. Referring to the naming of the new-born, he says: "The father or the nearest relation sends for the *Mulva* (maulavi) or priest who shutting the Book, the father pricks between the leaves of the Book, where when opened, the *Mulva* takes the first letter in that leaf and the meaning thereof, called the child."<sup>72\*</sup> This practice of consulting the Holy Book still prevails among the Muslims. It was not considered proper to have a name comprising more than four words.<sup>72†</sup>

### Birthday anniversaries

Birthday anniversaries were celebrated by the rich with great rejoicings. It was the usual custom to add a knot to a yellow silken or cotton string allotted to the child on his birth.<sup>73</sup> The birthday of the ruling monarch was celebrated throughout the Empire with great pomp and show.<sup>74</sup> From the time of Humayun onwards, on this occasion the Emperor was weighed against certain precious metals and articles which were given away in charity.<sup>75</sup> Aurangzeb stopped this practice in the 51st year of his reign.<sup>76</sup> The princes were also weighed on the solar anniversaries of their birth.<sup>77</sup>

### *Chhathi* or the sixth day

*Chhathi* or the sixth day<sup>78</sup> is also an important festival. Manucci mentions great celebrations on this day.<sup>79</sup> Festivals were held, illumination was arranged and fireworks were set off.<sup>80</sup> It was customary, after bathing the child, to put on a shirt made of any article of dress worn by some ancient worthi. Akbar's first clothes were made out of the garments of the Sayyid Ali Shirazi.<sup>82</sup>

### *Aqiqah* rite

The *Aqiqah* rite was usually performed on the seventh day.<sup>83</sup> It consisted of a sacrifice of two goats for a boy and one for a girl. The first shaving of the child was also performed on this day. Abul Fazl alludes to a Turkish custom incorporated by the Mughals. When a child began to walk, it was usual for the father or the grandfather to strike it with a turban so that it might fall down. Mirza Askeri performed this rite when Akbar was one year and four months old.<sup>84</sup> It was supposed to ward off the evil eye.<sup>85</sup> There seem to have been no hair-cutting ceremony among the Muslims. The author of *Darbar-i-Akbari*, however, mentions that Akbar was specially taken to the Dargah of Hasan Abdal for this rite.

### *Maktab* ceremony

The *Bismillah* (initiation) or more properly the *Maktab* ceremony was performed when a boy was four years, four months and four days old.<sup>87</sup> Most of the Mughal princes

began their education at this age.<sup>88</sup> It is similar to the Hindu ceremony of *Upanayana*.

### Circumcision

It appears that *Sunnat* or the circumcision ceremony<sup>89</sup> was performed at a very young age with great pomp and show<sup>90</sup> during Mughal days. Ashraf's view that a Muslim child was circumcised usually at the age of seven is not borne out by documentary evidence.<sup>91</sup> Jahangir, Murad and Daniyal were all circumcised before they were five years old.<sup>92</sup> Akbar prohibited this rite before the age of 12 and even then left it to the boy's option.<sup>93</sup> This order, however, did not check this practice. Fryer saw the rite performed with all pomp and show at the age of eight.<sup>94</sup> Manucci refers to its celebration with usual feasting during the reign of Aurangzeb.<sup>95</sup>

## MARRIAGE CEREMONIES

### General

*Vivaha* is the most important of all the Hindu *samskaras*.<sup>96</sup> For several reasons marriage was held in high esteem by ancient people.<sup>97</sup> In Mughal days also Hindus regarded it as "one of the greatest felicities of human life."<sup>98</sup> Marriage was the rule<sup>99</sup> and the few<sup>100</sup> who turned their face from it from pious motives were highly respected. Dadu's reply to Raja Man Singh of Amber regarding the advisability of celibacy was significant: "When so many are aflame with lust, what reproach is there in continence. . . . I neither enjoin marriage nor forbid it. Let each choose for himself the poison or the nectar."<sup>101</sup> Marriage was of great importance to a Muhammadan who followed the edict of the Prophet that every Muhammadan should marry.<sup>102</sup> Celibacy was condemned by the Prophet,<sup>103</sup> and Abul Fazl elaborates thus: "If there be no marriages then the fountain-head of humanity shall become choked and the stream of divine benevolence shall sink into the sand."<sup>104</sup>

### Early marriages

Early marriages were no doubt in vogue in those days.<sup>105</sup> Socio-political and religious circumstances compelled a father to have his daughter married as early as possible.<sup>106</sup> The anxiety



of a Brahman general of the Peshwa who could not get his daughter married at the age of nine may well be imagined : "If the marriage is postponed to the next year," he wrote from the battlefield, "the bride would be as old as ten. It will be a veritable calamity and scandal."<sup>107</sup>

Abul Fazl also alludes to this custom when he writes : "It is held expedient that the bride should be under eight and any age over ten is thought improper."<sup>108</sup> The assertion of European travellers like Pelsaert, Mandelslo, Thevenot and others that the barbarians would marry off their children in teens may further corroborate it.<sup>109</sup> Gandharb Sen, the Raja of Sangaldip, according to Jayasi, made preparations for the marriage of his daughter at the age of two.<sup>110</sup> But Varadraja, a pupil of Bhattoji Dikshit, considered it an evil practice among the southerners to marry off a daughter before she had attained the age of four.<sup>111</sup> An enlightened king like Akbar was fully conscious of the dangers inherent in such early marriages and issued orders that the boys were not to marry before the age of sixteen, nor girls before fourteen.<sup>112</sup> It was the duty of the Kotwal to verify and note down the ages of the couple before giving his consent to the marriage. The remark of Badaoni<sup>113</sup> that "in this way corruption became rife...large profit found their way into the pockets of the police officers" may be true but it was indeed a bold venture and must have put some check. This order was neither rigorously enforced nor renewed by the later emperors.<sup>114</sup> It appears, however, from the accounts of the contemporary travellers that in many cases this early marriage, especially among the urban population, used to be a formal function as the actual cohabitation took place much later.<sup>115</sup> Ferishta<sup>116</sup> and Bartolomeo,<sup>117</sup> a later traveller, describe it as a betrothal function. Ferishta writes : "Nehal, a farmer-girl, had been betrothed to a young man of her own caste in childhood agreeably to the custom of Hindustan." The girl would be brought up usually in her parents' home after the ceremony till the age of puberty when after great ceremony she would go back to her husband's home.<sup>118</sup> Manucci, Purchas, Linschoten, besides many other contemporary travellers, corroborate it. It is interesting to note, however, that the Mughal princes were married when fairly grown up.<sup>119</sup>

### Intercaste marriages

Intercaste marriages were out of fashion.<sup>120</sup> In addition to the consideration of *varna*, the particular family to be related was thoroughly examined. The reason for this, as Abul Fazal asserts, was the desire for best progeny for which physically, mentally and morally fit matches were necessary, as the children inherit the good or bad qualities of their parents.<sup>121</sup> The curious reader may refer to the *Ain* for details regarding caste restrictions.<sup>122</sup> Careri<sup>123</sup> and Manucci<sup>124</sup> have also dealt with this topic at some length. The rules were, however, not rigidly adhered to as is evident from a perusal of the *Duracaras* by Varadaraja, a pupil of Bhattoji Diksita.<sup>125</sup>

### Marriage among Muslims

No such restrictions exist among Muslims. Barring a few close relations such as mother, grandmother, sister, niece, aunt, etc. they have complete freedom of choice.<sup>126</sup> But in spite of this, it is to be noted, marriages between Shias and Sunnis, Turks and Indians were very rare.<sup>127</sup> Mughals, too, maintained their distinction. Siadat Khan, a noble of Aurangzeb's reign, refused to marry the daughter of a Shiah courtier, Ruhullah Khan.<sup>128</sup>

Marriages between near relations were common among Muhammadans.<sup>129</sup> Akbar, however, disliked this custom and thought it highly improper to get into a matrimonial alliance with near and dear ones.<sup>130</sup> Abul Fazl commends it in certain circumstances when it is to be regarded as a "slight evil for a great good."<sup>131</sup> Among Hindus it was thought improper for a younger brother or sister to marry so long as the elder was unmarried.<sup>132</sup> Some Maharashtrians, however, did indulge in it for practical convenience.<sup>133</sup>

### Age of husband and wife

Hindus followed Manu's edict that a bridegroom should be older than his bride.<sup>134</sup> There was no such restriction under Muhammadan law. Sometimes a young man attracted by the wealth of an old lady would marry her, disregarding the abnormal difference in age.<sup>135</sup> The evil spread so much that Akbar had to issue strict orders declaring such marriages illegal. He further laid it down that if a woman happened to

be older by 12 years than her husband, the marriage should be considered illegal and annulled.<sup>136</sup> It is to be noted, however, that neither any social custom nor any statutory law prevented an old man from marrying a girl of tender years.

Widow marriages were not looked upon with favour in Hindu society. So the difference in age between husband and wife became enormous when an old widower had no other choice than either to marry a girl of tender years or not to marry at all.<sup>137</sup>

### Number of wives

Monogamy was the rule among the generality of the Hindus,<sup>138</sup> who "would take to a second wife only if the first wife is sick or proves barren or if the children die."<sup>139</sup> Saint Tukaram, whose first wife was afflicted with asthma, had to be married again.<sup>140</sup> Abul Fazl<sup>141</sup> and Badaoni,<sup>142</sup> besides several European travellers,<sup>143</sup> testify to it. Polygamy was, however, not unknown. Princes and the richer classes of men did indulge in it. For example, Bhavananda Majumdar of Bharat Chandra's *Annandamangala* had two wives. Nityananda, a disciple of Chaitanya, had two wives who were sisters.<sup>143\*</sup> But, as Mukundram notes, public opinion did not look upon it with favour.

In spite of the freedom granted by their religion to marry "whatever woman you like, three and three, four and four,"<sup>144</sup> the common Muhammadan, it appears, preferred to have one wife.<sup>145</sup> Akbar was in favour of monogamy and considered it highly injurious to a man's health to have more than one wife.<sup>146</sup> He issued orders that a man of ordinary means should not possess more than one wife unless the first proved to be barren.<sup>147</sup> The wealthy people kept several wives<sup>148</sup> and sometimes even exceeded the prescribed limit of four fixed by the Prophet.<sup>149</sup> There were many discussions over this controversial issue in the *Ibadat Khanna*<sup>150</sup> and the final decision reached by the *ulema* was that a man might marry any number of wives by *mutah* but only four by *nikah*.<sup>151</sup>

### Negotiations of marriages

The selection of a match was left solely to the discretion of the parents.<sup>152</sup> The boy had a little say while the girl, with the exception of upper-class Rajput virgins, had none at all.<sup>153</sup>

Usually there were *Purohitanis* or female match-makers who knew of "all eligible parties and suitable matches" and could suggest many for selection.<sup>154</sup> Badaoni calls such persons *qawwals*.<sup>155</sup> Chaitanya's marriage to Lakshmi Devi came through the mediation of the Brahman match-maker Banamali.<sup>156</sup> Rarely would a mother-in-law in Hindu families express a wish to see the prospective bride.<sup>157</sup> People in general and Muslims in particular married on "reports, interest and respects."<sup>158</sup> A liberal king like Akbar was of the opinion that the consent of the bride and the bridegroom and the permission of the parents should be essential before the confirmation of the marriage.<sup>159</sup> He appointed two government officers, "sober and sensible men" called *Tuibegs*, to look into the circumstances of both parties.<sup>160</sup> A tax ranging from one *dam* to ten *mohrs*, according to the status of the parties, was also charged by the government.<sup>161</sup> Royal consent had to be obtained before a marriage amongst the children of the nobles could be arranged. As Khoja Barkhardar, the eldest son of Nakshbandi, had been married to the daughter of Mahabat Khan without the king's knowledge, the Emperor felt greatly offended, sent for the young man and had him thrown into prison.<sup>162</sup> It is interesting to note in this connection that the usual practice among the Mughal kings was not to marry off their daughters. Aurangzeb, however, gave it up probably under the influence of Muslim *faqirs*<sup>163</sup> and got married two of his daughters Mihr-un-Nissa and Zubdat-ud-Nissa.<sup>164</sup>

### Expensive weddings

Marriage has always been an expensive affair in India.<sup>165</sup> Hedges found Muslim weddings very magnificent and expensive.<sup>166</sup> Grose, a later 18th-century traveller, writes about the Indians' lavish expenditure on feasting, ornaments on their horses, processions, music, dancing girls, fireworks, etc.<sup>167</sup> A Hindu of ordinary means, according to Bocarro, a 17th-century traveller to Sind, would spend four or five thousand rupees on a marriage.<sup>168</sup> Grose saw some of the Bengali merchants spending about a lakh of rupees besides making innumerable presents.<sup>169</sup> The total expenditure on Dara's marriage came to be about Rs. 32 lakhs out of which 16 lakhs was contributed by Jahanara.<sup>170</sup>

### The marriage ceremony

When both parties had agreed to enter into a matrimonial alliance the betrothal or *tilak* ceremony was celebrated.<sup>171</sup> An auspicious day was fixed for the marriage ceremony after consulting astrologers.<sup>172</sup> Humayun, when in exile and himself a great believer in astrology, took the astrolabe in his own hand, waited for the appointed time, summoned Mir Abul Baqa, one of his learned nobles and relation of the bride Hamida Banu, and asked him to "bind fast the marriage bond."<sup>173</sup> Invitations were issued (by Hindus) on palm-leaves dyed with saffron to mark the jubilation and the solemnity of the auspicious occasion.<sup>174</sup> We shall now briefly survey the Hindu and Muslim rituals separately.

### Hindu marriage rituals

(a) *The Procession.* It is difficult to give a comprehensive description of the marriage ceremonies among Hindus which differ from caste to caste, from tribe to tribe and from province to province.<sup>175</sup> But religious and social conservatism is so strong in India that the outlines of the *Samskaras*, as Abul Fazl notes, are observed in much the same manner everywhere as in Vedic times. Abul Fazl refers to eight forms of marriages<sup>176</sup> recognised by the *Smritis* but the *Brahmya*<sup>177</sup> form seems to have been the most in vogue. It was essential for the bride to put on bracelets of red colour.<sup>178</sup> Tulsidas refers to the ceremony of binding round the wrist of the bridegroom a piece of cloth containing minute particles of different things. It is taken off after the marriage on an auspicious day with due ceremonies.<sup>179</sup> A *mandapa* was set up in the bride's house.<sup>180</sup> Jayasi<sup>181</sup> and Manucci<sup>182</sup> give a description of the arbour which, as the latter says, "is essential for everybody from the king down to a shepherd."<sup>183</sup> It was decorated with wedding wreaths of flowers, and festoons of mango-leaves were hung before its doors. When the relatives and friends had gathered and necessary preparations for the marriage had been made, the richly clad bridegroom with a veil of gold net hanging down from his head,<sup>184</sup> seated on a gorgeously caprisoned and beautifully decorated horse and supported by a grown-up man seated behind him, started for the house of the bride.<sup>185</sup> His relatives and friends in their best attire either followed him on foot or

in coaches according to their status.<sup>186</sup> Ladies, too, accompanied the procession usually in palanquins.<sup>187</sup> Hindus would put on yellow clothes on such an auspicious occasion.<sup>188</sup> Several European travellers have described the glamour of an Indian procession which was headed by a musical party with "drums and wind instruments and some mixed pastimes to increase the merriments."<sup>189</sup> Della Valle was much attracted by these oddly clothed bandmen whose bodies above the gridle were all painted and who decorated themselves with bracelets and necklaces of gold, silver and flowers, the skirts or their multi-coloured turbans trailing behind them.<sup>190</sup> Torches, lamps and candles usually preceded a procession at night.<sup>191</sup> As the procession moved on, it was usual to let off bombs and fireworks and "cast squibs and crackers into the air."<sup>192</sup> On arriving at the destination, the party was heartily welcomed by the bride's people and accommodated in well-decorated and furnished rooms.<sup>193</sup> They were served with sumptuous meals according to the host's position.<sup>194</sup> While Malik Muhammad Jayasi<sup>195</sup> and Tulsidas<sup>196</sup> describe the meals served at a prince's wedding, Manucci<sup>197</sup> confines himself to those provided by a common man.

(b) *The Nuptials.* After such preliminary ceremonies<sup>198</sup> as presentation of garments for the bride,<sup>199</sup> etc., the principal marriage rituals commenced at a fixed hour in the booth where the pair had been brought and seated on a raised platform.<sup>200</sup> A fairly comprehensive account of the marriage rituals may be found in the *Padmavat*,<sup>201</sup> *Ram Charit Manas*<sup>202</sup> and *Sur Sagar*.<sup>203</sup> The narrations of the European travellers, usually based on hearsay, are not reliable.<sup>204</sup> Of these rituals, which were long and tedious, the most important and widespread were the solemn handing over of the maiden by her father (*kanyadana*), the joining of the right hands of the bride and bridegroom (*panigrahana*) respectively, the recitation of the Vedic formulae including speech by the bridegroom to the bride assenting to their union, the making of libations to the fire, and the threefold circumambulation of the fire, the seven steps taken together by the wedded pair and, finally the taking away of the bride to her new home by the bridegroom.<sup>205</sup> The bride and the bridegroom would also put garlands around each other's neck.<sup>206</sup> Manucci<sup>207</sup> and Bartolomeo<sup>208</sup> refer to the Malabari custom of tying a little

piece of gold called *tali*<sup>209</sup> by the bridegroom around the neck of the bride. It was usual for all respectable persons present to touch the *tali* before it was passed on to the bridegroom.<sup>210</sup> Jayasi refers to the practice of applying turmeric paste to the bodies of the bride and the bridegroom. It was removed after the conclusion of the marriage.<sup>211</sup>

It was a custom in Bengal and even in some other parts of India that the bride and the bridegroom played dice after the marriage had been celebrated. In Bengal, the game was usually played in a specially decorated apartment known as *Basar Ghar*.<sup>211\*</sup>

(c) *Gifts and Presents*. Reference may be made here to another ceremony called *tamol*<sup>212</sup> in which presents were offered in cash, gold, clothes by bride's father to the bridegroom and some of his relatives at a joint meeting of the two parties.<sup>213</sup> As a gesture of goodwill to his Hindu subjects Akbar is said to have ordained that the village officials should present two *narial*s (coconuts), one on their own behalf and the other on behalf of the Mughal Emperor, to the parties.<sup>214</sup> The *Bhat* would stand up and exclaim :

*Akbar Shah Badshah de ghar da narial*

*Raja Todar Mal Tanan de ghar da narial*

*Misr Chhabildas Brahman de ghar da narial*

*Kishne Mangle de ghar da narial*

*Rain Ram Prithvipat Narule de ghar da narial*.<sup>215</sup>

Tulsidas refers to the interesting sport of mess of rice-milk indulged in during the marriage.<sup>216</sup>

(d) *Simplified Nuptials*. Sometimes the marriage was celebrated in a simpler way. The bride and the bridegroom, together with a priest, a cow and a calf, were taken to the waterside, the Brahman holding a white cloth 14 yards in length and a basket crossbound with diverse things in it. The bridegroom held the hand of the priest, the bride that of her husband and all held the cow by the tail. Water was poured on the cow's tail and they went round the cow and the calf which were handed over to the priest together with some money.<sup>217</sup>

### **Muslim weddings**

Muslim weddings<sup>218</sup> have been described at some length

by the European travellers Pelsaert,<sup>219</sup> Thevenot<sup>220</sup> and Manucci.<sup>221</sup> Scattered references to the marriages of the princes are also available in the Persian chronicles<sup>222</sup> of the period. The marriage celebrations which, according to Pelsaert, lasted from three to four days, began with the sending of *sachaq* (four precious gifts usually along with the red dye) for the bride.<sup>223</sup> In Bengal, however, it is known as the *halud* (haldi or turmeric) ceremony when the turmeric is pasted on the body of the bride.<sup>223\*</sup> Fruits and sweetmeats, arranged in beautiful trays, together with some cash were also sent.<sup>224</sup> A sum of fifty thousand rupees was sent by Jahangir as *sachaq* on the marriage of Khurram to the daughter of Muzaffar Husain,<sup>225</sup> while a sum of Rs. 2 lakhs was spent on the *sachaq* of Dara Shukoh.<sup>225\*</sup> The gifts would be carried to her house by a party of the bridegroom's friends, accompanied with music.<sup>226</sup> Ladies of the royal household, the mother, sisters and paternal aunts of the late Empress (Mumtaz Mahal) took *sachaq* worth about Rs. 2 lakhs to the house of the bride on Dara's marriage.<sup>227</sup> The actual wedding celebrations came off after a few months when the *hennabandi* ceremony was performed with due rituals.<sup>228</sup> The groom's hands, according to a custom, were dyed red with *henna*<sup>229</sup> (*Lawsonia alba*) by ladies concealed behind the curtain. The hands of the guests were also stained with the auspicious *henna*. They returned after receiving suitable presents.<sup>230</sup>

The hands of the bridegroom were washed with rose-water after an hour when he would drink, according to Manucci, a glass of water in confirmation of the marriage.<sup>231</sup> The rest of the ceremonials in connection with the *nikah* were invariably performed by the *Qazi*<sup>232</sup> or his deputy who would appoint two men of full ages as witnesses.<sup>233</sup> Then followed the usual ceremonies, the formal consent of the bride to the match, the recitation by the bridegroom of the usual prayers, the *Astagh-farul-lah*,<sup>234</sup> the four *Quls*, the *Kalma*, the *Sifat-i-Imam*, and the *Dua-i-qunut*,<sup>235</sup> etc. and the announcement of the *mahr* or marriage settlement,<sup>236</sup> which was of great importance. Hindal was not agreeable to the marriage of Hamida Banu to Humayun, as the latter, being in exile, was not in a position to fix a proper *maash*<sup>237</sup> (subsistence allowance). Shahjahan fixed as allowance of the bride the same amount, i.e., Rs. 5 lakhs, which he had promised to Mumtaz.<sup>238</sup> A chapter from the *Quran* invoking



God's blessings on the couple would conclude the marriage rituals.<sup>239</sup>

The huge expenditure on the occasion of the marriage celebrations in upper-class families has been frequently referred to by foreign travellers and contemporary chronicles. For example, on the marriage of Akram-ul-Daulah, brother of Siraj-ul-Daulah, the expenditure on scents, illumination and fireworks was 12 lakh rupees.<sup>239\*</sup> The festivities continued for three months.

### Dowry

Dowry system was rather rigorously observed in Mughal days. Several European travellers have referred to this custom<sup>240</sup> which was harsh to the poor<sup>241</sup> who found it difficult to get their daughters married on account of their inability to pay handsome dowries.<sup>242</sup> Sometimes a poor father could not afford to procure even a wedding outfit for his daughter.<sup>243</sup> Tukaram could get his daughters married only through the contribution of the villagers.<sup>244</sup> Ballabhacharya was hesitant to let his daughter be engaged to Chaitanya as he was poor and not in a position to pay a handsome dowry<sup>245</sup> which might include, in a middle-class family, household articles of various kinds, utensils, clothes, gold or silver ornaments.<sup>246</sup> Huge dowries have been referred to by Jayasi,<sup>247</sup> Tulsidas,<sup>248</sup> and Surdas<sup>249</sup> in addition to several travellers. On the marriage of Salim, for instance, Raja Bhagwan Das, the father of the bride Man Bai, gave as dowry several strings of Persian, Arab, Turkish and Cutch horses together with one hundred elephants and many male and female slaves—Abyssinian, Circassian and Indian—besides all sorts of vessels of gold and other costly stuff. He offered to each of the *amirs* present Persian, Turkish and Arabian horses with gold saddles.<sup>250</sup> Sometimes whole villages were given as dowry.<sup>251</sup> Akbar was, no doubt, against high dowries,<sup>252</sup> but he made no effort, it seems, to check this evil practice. It will be interesting to relate that Princess Zinat-un-Nisa, who loved a maiden's life, begged the amount of her dowry from her father and spent it in building a mosque at Delhi known as *Kunwari Masjid*.<sup>253</sup>

## FUNERAL CEREMONIES

### Hindu funeral ceremonies

*Antyesti* or the funeral ceremonies are of great importance to the Hindu to whom the value of the next world is higher than that of the present one.<sup>254</sup> Of the huge mass of prescriptions to be found in the published and unpublished texts or of the variations presented by the usage of different schools of worship and families we may enumerate the most important ones,<sup>255</sup> viz., *Udakakarma*, *Asaucha*, *Asthi Sanchayana*, *Santikarma* and *Sapindikaraṇ* which are common to different parts of this sub-continent.

Cremation<sup>256</sup> or burning of the dead body was the most recognised mode of the disposal of the corpse during the Mughal period. It was motivated, according to Terry<sup>257</sup> and Ovington,<sup>258</sup> by a desire to avoid the "corpse being devoured by worms and putrefaction." Abul Fazl enumerates certain classes to whom this privilege was denied.<sup>259</sup> In special circumstances, if wood and water were not available, Hindu law-givers allowed the corpse to be buried.<sup>260</sup> But in Assam<sup>261</sup> and Malabar<sup>262</sup> burial proper seems to have been quite common. Inhumation (burial proper), preferably water-burial, was, however, resorted to,<sup>263</sup> as prescribed by the scriptures,<sup>264</sup> in the case of small children, usually under three,<sup>265</sup> and ascetics<sup>266</sup> who did not need purification.<sup>267</sup>

### Last functions

The rituals commenced, as related by Abul Fazl, from the moment a person was in *articulo mortis* when he would be lifted from the cot and carefully placed on the ground,<sup>268</sup> rubbed all over with cow-dung and strewn with green grass,<sup>269</sup> with the head pointing to the north and the feet to the south.<sup>270</sup> Abul Fazl wrongly reverses the position.<sup>271</sup> Holy Ganges water<sup>272</sup> with a ruby, pearl or gold in it was poured into his mouth while sectarian marks were drawn on his forehead and a *tulsi* leaf (*ocymum sanctum*) was placed on his breast.<sup>273</sup> The gift of a cow—to act as his conductor over the stream marking the boundary of the other world<sup>274</sup>—in addition to several sorts of edibles<sup>275</sup> is regarded as very auspicious for his further welfare. The omission of any reference by Abul Fazl and others to the

burning of a *diya* by the side of the sick man is surprising.<sup>276</sup> A curious custom called *Antarjali* referred to by Careri,<sup>277</sup> Tavernier<sup>278</sup> and Della Valle,<sup>279</sup> corroborating Abul Fazl,<sup>280</sup> was sometimes followed, particularly in Bengal.<sup>281</sup> A person in a dying condition would be carried to a nearby river where the lower half of his body<sup>282</sup> would be immersed in water at the moment of his death.<sup>283</sup> The usual Indian lamentation would follow with the females standing in a customary circle and beating their naked breasts and singing doleful songs.<sup>284</sup> Guru Nanak referred to the Indian custom of tearing the top of a letter when announcing the death of a relative.<sup>285</sup> There would be no such lamentation at the death of an aged person. Della Valle, Petermund Ovington and Manucci have described in detail the great merrymaking and feasting which took place on such an occasion,<sup>286</sup> as he "hath so well performed his time and arrived to such a good age."<sup>287</sup>

### Cremation rites

The preparations for the cremation started immediately after death as, according to the Hindu belief, it was essential for the salvation of the soul of the deceased that the corpse should be disposed of as early as possible.<sup>288</sup> After the usual purificatory ceremonies like painting of nails, shaving of hair,<sup>289</sup> etc. the body was given a cold bath (known as *Abhisinchana ceremony*) and wrapped in a new sheet or suit,<sup>290</sup> the colour of which differed according to the age, sex, position and other circumstances.<sup>291</sup> The corpse of a married woman, according to Abul Fazl, was dressed in her usual daily robes.<sup>292</sup> Sandal-wood paste, white clay, jasmine-oil, mixed with saffron, essence of roses, etc. were used for his or her last toilet, in accordance with the deceased's means.<sup>293</sup>

The funeral procession which started for the cremation ground, usually situated near a river bank,<sup>294</sup> was headed by the chief mourners; the bier<sup>295</sup> (made of sandal-wood in the case of the rich)<sup>296</sup> shouldered by four persons followed it.<sup>297</sup> A musical band, however, headed the funeral procession of an aged person and conches were blown.<sup>298</sup> Relatives and friends followed the corpse bareheaded and barefooted, crying "Ram Ram."<sup>299</sup> The carrying of the fire brand kindled from the domestic fire<sup>300</sup>

did not escape the notice of an astute observer like Della Valle.<sup>301</sup>

The kind of wood used, the size and the orientation of the pyres and the details relating to them are regulated by sacred texts and nothing is left to the whims of the mourners.<sup>302</sup> Ordinary wood was used for the pyre of a commoner while sandal and *lignum aloes* was employed by the rich.<sup>303</sup> Ghee was put into the eyes, nostrils, ears, etc. of the deceased before it was set fire to by his nearest male relation—the eldest son, or the youngest brother in the case of a female, and the husband in the case of a wife.<sup>304</sup> The mourners would now retire,<sup>305</sup> leaving a few professional persons called *Bettiao* (*Battiyai*) or burners who employed sticks, etc. to help the body to be burnt completely.<sup>306</sup> After the *Udakakarma* ceremony<sup>307</sup> which consisted in offering water to the deceased and purifactory bath,<sup>308</sup> the relatives returned home chewing leaves of *pichumanda* (*Azadirachta indica*) or the *neem* tree before entering the door.<sup>309</sup> The sons and grandsons of the deceased<sup>310</sup> and the widow, too, if she survived her husband, would get their heads shaved.<sup>311</sup> The subjects would do likewise on the death of a kind ruler.<sup>312</sup>

### Mourning observances

*Asaucha* (uncleanliness) period varied from one to ten days<sup>313</sup> and even month<sup>314</sup> according to caste, age, sex, relationship and also circumstances and usages of different schools.<sup>315</sup> John Nieuhof describes in detail the mourning observances as followed in Malabar on the death of a king.<sup>316</sup> The generality of the Hindus, it appears, followed the prescribed rules which forbid certain things during this period of defilement such as the cutting of the hair and beard, study of the *Vedas*, offerings to deities, etc.<sup>317</sup> The positive rules, which enjoin for a period of three days continence, sleeping on the ground, living on begged or purchased food, eating only in the daytime, were also observed.<sup>318</sup> All the earthen vessels in the house were broken and thrown away. Gaudy dresses were avoided and the women covered their heads with white *dopattas* as a sign of mourning.<sup>319</sup> Various charitable acts, such as freeing oxen purchased from the market, the bestowing of milch cows and heifers on the poor, etc., were also performed.<sup>320</sup>

*Sanchayana* or the ceremony of collection of bones and

ashes would take place with due rites, after an interval varying from four to ten days according to different castes.<sup>321</sup> The bones would be washed in milk,<sup>322</sup> deposited in an urn or a bag of deer-skin,<sup>323</sup> and thrown into a river<sup>324</sup> preferably in the Ganges.<sup>325</sup> It was the practice to make daily an offering usually of rice cooked in milk to the deceased<sup>326</sup> from the cremation day till the 10th or 12th day when the food ceremony of *Pitramedha*<sup>327</sup> (*Sapindikaran* or uniting the *Preta* with the *Pitaras*) would be usually performed. Then the soul of the deceased is said to have reached its heavenly abode. Manucci refers to the custom of offering a petticoat to the widow by each of the relatives and some cash, ornaments, and clothes by brothers on the 13th day when the period of mourning ended.<sup>328</sup> *Shraddha*,<sup>329</sup> which Abul Fazl describes as the charity given in the name of the deceased, was observed usually on the death anniversary.<sup>330</sup> Jahangir also refers to this practice which was according to the Emperor one of the standing rules and customs in Hindustan.<sup>331</sup> Its significance and mode of performance have been described at some length in the *Ain*.<sup>332</sup> Four or five Brahmans would be properly fed and money and dresses and gifts in kind would be bestowed on them in the name of the deceased.<sup>333</sup> Tukaram would not forgo this solemn ceremony even though there was not a penny at home.<sup>334</sup> It was thought more efficacious<sup>335</sup> if the ceremony could be performed at a shrine.

### Muhammadian funeral ceremonies

Funeral ceremonies of the Muslims vary little in different parts of the Muslim world and are almost similar for men and women.<sup>336</sup> Most of the rituals are based on the traditions of the Prophet but two customs—the wailing of women and the recital of the praises of the dead—are observed in direct defiance to his commands.<sup>337</sup> No detailed account of the rituals is traceable in the contemporary works of the period. It is certain, however, from the few and scattered references to be found here and there in the accounts of foreign travellers that these ceremonies must have been observed in much the same manner as they are today. The curious reader may refer to the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (Vol. IV, pp. 501 ff.) for details.

Muslims are great believers in *fal* and often resort to this practice. The *Quran* or the *Diwan* of Khwaja Hafiz Shirazi is consulted for the purpose. During the last illness of Aurangzeb, Mohammad Akhlaś took out the *fal* from the *Diwan* of Shirazi which was regarded as ominous by the Emperor.<sup>338</sup> The *Yasin* chapter of the *Quran* (or Chapter XXXVI) is read by the sick-bed of the dying person and his face is usually turned towards *qibla* (direction of Mecca).<sup>339</sup> *Sharbat* or holy water from the *zamzam* well at Mecca, if available, may be poured down his throat to "facilitate exit of vital spark."<sup>340</sup>

### Manner of announcing great man's death

Death is announced by using certain euphemisms especially in the case of great men. Emperor Babar "departed from the fleeting world for the everlasting abode in paradise."<sup>341</sup> A special procedure had to be followed during the Mughal days to announce the death of a prince or a dear one to the Emperor. The *Vakil* of the deceased would appear before the king with a blue handkerchief tied around his arm.<sup>342</sup> Abul Fazl's death was announced to Akbar in this manner.<sup>343</sup>

Several European travellers have referred to the loud lamentations of the womenfolk. These immediately followed a death.<sup>344</sup> Azam Shah is reported to have wept like a baby on seeing his father's (Aurangzeb's) dead body and called him aloud as ordinary people do.<sup>345</sup> Ovington refers to the great skill of Indians in preserving a corpse from decomposition by the repetition of some words and not by embalming like Egyptians.<sup>346</sup> It is, however, certain that the injunction of the *Quran* regarding the quick burial of the corpse was invariably followed.<sup>347</sup> The body was wrapped in the customary shroud,<sup>348</sup> usually by a *Qazi*<sup>349</sup> after having been given a cold bath by a professional washer, male or female as the case may be.<sup>350</sup> Ghosts were much dreaded and in order to baffle them, it was usual, especially among the royal family, to remove the corpse, through an opening in the wall.<sup>351</sup>

### The bier

The body, place on a bed-plank with the head to the east and the face towards *Kaba*, was carried to the graveyard

by four from the near relatives, every now and then relieved by an equal number.<sup>352</sup> Akbar escorted the body of Maham Anis-ud-din for some distance.<sup>353</sup> Hamid-ud-din Khan Bahadur, Governor of Ahmadnagar, carried the body of Aurangzeb on his shoulders to the outside of the *Diwan-i-Adalat*<sup>354</sup> and then followed the bier on foot, pulling out his hair in grief.<sup>355</sup> The nobleman's bier, covered with flowers and heavily perfumed, was carried with befitting honour and dignity. The deceased's insignia of rank, flags, elephants, cavalry, etc. accompanied it.<sup>357</sup> Relatives and friends following the bier of a male deceased would go on repeating the creed or the benediction.<sup>358</sup>

But no such prayers were uttered in the case of females who, as Manucci writes, "have no entry into heaven" according to Muhammadan belief.<sup>360</sup> People showed great respect to the dead in deference to the wishes of the Prophet.<sup>361</sup> The passers-by stood up in reverence to the sight of a bier and said prayers for the soul of the deceased.<sup>362</sup> The main funeral service took place in the mosque where prayers were recited by an Imam and his attendant high,<sup>363</sup> the bier lying on the ground with the deceased's right side towards Mecca.<sup>364</sup>

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### Internment rites

The body was gently lifted out of the bier and placed with its back in the deeply dug grave,<sup>365</sup> its head pointing to the north, and its face kept towards Mecca in the belief that it might arise, as Sir John Marshall writes, on the Day of Judgment "with his face towards that holy place."<sup>366</sup> A little earth was sprinkled, chapter CXII or XX of the *Qur'an* was recited and the grave was closed. Then the *fiqh* or the theologian would repeat the five correct answers<sup>367</sup> to the questions given by the deceased to the examining angels on that night (*Lailat al wagha*—night of desolation) and, after saying *fatiha* for the deceased and also for all the dead in the cemetery twice,<sup>368</sup> all returned home, took a bath and washed their clothes.<sup>369</sup>

### Period of mourning

Mourning was observed for forty days according to Manucci.<sup>370</sup> It was customary with the Mughal kings to pre-

mourning dresses to the heirs on the death of a noble.<sup>371</sup> Dainty dishes and gaudy dresses were avoided during this period.<sup>372</sup> Jahangir refused to change his dress for some days on the death of Qutb-ud-Din Koka's mother whom the Emperor regarded as his own mother.<sup>373</sup> Shahjahan, too, gave up the use of coloured garments on the death of Mumtaz Mahal.<sup>374</sup> He would not listen to music and even abandoned the customary feasts.<sup>375</sup> Prince Azam Khan, although he was greatly fond of music and dance, gave up both the entertainments on the death of his beloved wife Jahanzeb Banu Begam.<sup>376</sup> On hearing of Shahjahan's death, Aurangzeb and the princes royal and the ladies of the harem put on white clothes.<sup>377</sup> The Hindu custom of getting oneself shaved after the death of a dear one seems to have been followed by Muhammadans also.<sup>378</sup> It was customary for a widow belonging to a high-class family to cover her palanquin with green cloth as a sign of mourning for her deceased husband.<sup>379</sup> The relatives would visit the grave on the third, 10th and 19th day after death to perform certain rites.<sup>380</sup> It was usual to read certain chapters from the *Quran* and recite the *fatihe* on these occasions.<sup>381</sup> Badaoni particularly refers to the ceremonies on the third day or *Ziarat* when *sharbat*, betel-leaves, and food were distributed.<sup>382</sup> The mourning ended on 40th day when the relatives visited the grave and distributed food, clothes, and money to the poor and the needy in the name of the deceased.<sup>383</sup>

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### Anniversaries of death

The death anniversary was observed in a befitting manner.<sup>384</sup> Jahangir also refers to this custom which the Muslims borrowed from the Hindus.<sup>385</sup> Food was prepared according to the survivors' means and distributed among the poor after reciting the *fatihe*.<sup>386</sup> It is interesting to recall how one Naith recipient disliked the food distributed in memory of Nawab Shahid and remarked that had the Nawab been alive he would not have relished it.<sup>387</sup> The rich would illuminate the tombs of their ancestors,<sup>388</sup> while the common people set lamps at the former or at the house of the deceased.<sup>389</sup> It was customary to hold assemblies of respectable and learned men on these occasions.<sup>390</sup> The tombs of the saints built through the generosity of the rich<sup>391</sup> were places of reverence, where *maulavis* were



employed by philanthropists to recite the *Quran* by the side of the grave.<sup>392</sup> Devotees, especially women, visited these tombs frequently<sup>393</sup> and soon they became notorious as centres of immorality.<sup>394</sup> Aurangzeb, like Firoze Tughlaq,<sup>395</sup> a little earlier, was opposed to the visit of women to the cemeteries.<sup>396</sup> The orthodox Emperor did not even like roofs being set up over structures containing tombs and the white-washing of sepulchres.<sup>397</sup>

## NOTES

1. *Garbhadhana* (the ceremony of impregnation or conception) performed on the fourth day of the marriage and *Pumsavana* (a rite quickening a male child) celebrated in the third month of gestation and before the period of quickening deserve mention. R.B. Pandey, *Hindu Samskaras*, pp. 79-104; P. Thomas, *Hindu Religion, Customs and Manners*, p. 87. Also see G.P. Majumdar, *Some Aspects of Indian Civilization*, p. 301.
2. For details of these observances refer to R.B. Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-480; P. Thomas, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-96; G.P. Majumdar, *op. cit.*, pp. 295-408; Abbe J.A. Dubois, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies* (Oxford, 1897) pp. 155-72; James Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. II, pp. 650-51; Mrs. Sinclair Stevenson, *The Rites of the Twice Born*, Ch. I, pp. 1-26; W. Crookes, *The Natives of Northern India*, pp. 194-203; and for "Hindu Observances in the Punjab" see H.A. Rose's article in the *Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. XXXVII (1907) pp. 220-36. For "Some Beliefs and Customs relating to Birth among Santals" by W.J. Culshaw refer to J.R.A.S.B. Letters Vol. VII, 1941, pp. 115-27. For the ceremony of the sacred thread in the Punjab, see *Indian Antiquary* Vol. XXXI (1902), p. 216.
3. The rest of the ceremonies performed after birth are *Simantonnayana* known as *Simanta* (hair-splitting) in South India performed on the woman when she bears her first child, *Niskramana* (first outing) performed in the third or fourth month of a baby's birth, and *Annaprasana* (solid

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food giving ceremony) performed in the sixth month are observed by the orthodox only. R.B. Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-15, 146-50, and 151-57 respectively. Also see *Birth, Childhood and Puberty Ceremonies among the Bihors*, pp. 214-31, Bihar and Orissa Research Society Journal, Vol. IV, 1918.

4. The rites relating to marriage are *Vaghana* (pre-nuptial), *Vivaha* (nuptial) and daily life (post-nuptial) while those relating to death are *Antarjali* (pre-obituary), *Antyesti* (Obituary) and *Shraddha* (post-obituary). For details the reader may refer to G.P. Majumdar, *op. cit.*, pp. 367-408 and R.B. Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 407-80.
5. Bartolomeo (pp. 253-60) describes some of the ceremonies observed in Malabar in the 18th century.
6. "A Few Literary Glimpses of Social and Religious Life in Medieval Bengal," *Indian Culture*, Vol. X, No. 3, Jan-March, 1944.
7. For Tulsī's description of birthday ceremonies refer to F.S. Growse, *The Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Allahabad, 1883), pp. 97-98 ; also see *Sur Sagar*, published by Kashi Nagari Pracharini Sabha (Prayag, 1916), Vol. I, p. 263 ; B.P. Tiratha, *Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu*, pp. 271-72 ; *Padmavat* (Urdu), p. 25.
8. *Ain*, III, p. 317.
9. *Chaitanyabhagavata*, 1, 3, 17, quoted in *Indian Culture*, Vol. X, No. 3, p. 99 ; *Sur Sagar*, *op. cit.*, I, p. 263.
10. *The Ramayana of Tulsidas* (English translation) A.G. Atkins, Vol. I, p. 246. The *Nandimukh Shraddha* is a commemorative offering to the Manes preliminary to any joyous occasion such as initiation, marriage, etc. in which nine balls of meat are offered to the deceased father, grandfather, great grandfather, to the maternal grandfather and to the mother, paternal grandmother and paternal great grandmother. Growse, *op. cit.*, p. 97, f.n. 1 ; Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 123.
11. Growse, *op. cit.*, p. 97.
12. *Sur Sagar*, *op. cit.*, I, p. 263.
13. *Ain*, III, p. 317.
14. Guru Nanak's horoscope was prepared by Hardial. Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, Vol. I, p. 1. For Chaitanya

- refer to J.N. Sarkar, *Chaitanya's Life and Teachings*, p. 20 ; *Padmavat* (Urdu), p. 36, *Sur Sagar*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 290.
15. Ovington, *A Voyage to Surat* (ed. H.S. Rawlinson), 1920, p. 197 ; *Gauda-Lekhamala*, I, 6, 38, quoted in "Social and Religious Life in Medieval Bengal," *Indian Culture*, Vol. X, No. 3, Jan-March, 1944 ; Sarkar, *Chaitanya's Life and Teachings*, p. 20 ; Bartolomeo (pp. 258-59) describes the rites performed in Malabar in the 18th century. Also see B.P. Tiratha, *Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu*, pp. 271-75.
  16. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 282 ; *Ain*, II, p. 317 ; Growse, *op. cit.*, p. 99. According to Ovington (p. 197), this ceremony may be performed after ten days. The naming ceremony may be performed from the tenth day up to the first day of the second year. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 142.
  17. During this period, the house was regarded as unclean. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, I, p. 242.
  18. Fryer (old), p. 94. According to the traveller, the child is named without much ceremony.
  19. *Sur Sagar*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 290. Also see A.G. Atkinson, *The Ramayana of Tulsidas*, trans., Vol. I, p. 251.
  20. For details refer to B.P. Tiratha, *Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu*.
  21. *Padmavat* (Urdu), p. 25.
  22. *Sur Sagar*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 274-75.
  23. *Ibid.*
  24. Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 151-57.
  25. *Sur Sagar*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 291.
  26. *Ibid.*, p. 291.
  27. Alberuni refers to the hair-cutting ceremony in these words : "The ceremony on the occasion of the first cutting of the hair is offered in the third, the perforation of the ear takes place in the 7th and 8th year." Alberuni, II, (Sachan) p. 157. De Laet, p. 80. Also see Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 162 ; Growse, *op. cit.*, p. 102 ; Sanyal, *Shree Krishna Chaitanya*, Vol. I, p. 304 ; P. Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 89 ; G.P. Majumdar, *op. cit.*, pp. 335-37.

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28. *Indian Culture*, Vol. X, No. 3, p. 98. Compare Pandey *op. cit.*, pp. 173-74.
29. *Sur Sagar*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 321. Also see Sanyal, *op. cit.*, p. 304 ; Growse, *op. cit.*, p. 102.
30. *Sur Sagar*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 321.
31. R and B, I, p. 357. For details see Macauliffe, I, pp. 16-18.
32. S.N. Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 385 and pp. 4, 15. *Asiatick Researches*, V, pp. 16-17. On the *Janeo* ceremony of Guru Nanak, the priest explained : "Before this ceremony and the investiture of the sacred thread, a boy of any of the three higher castes is not recognised as belonging to his proper caste but a Sudra." Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, I, p. 17. Also see P. Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 90 ; Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
33. Careri (Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 259) raises the age to nine or even ten years. Guru Nanak was invested with the sacred thread at the age of nine years. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, p. 16. Padmavati was sent to school at the age of five. *Padmavat* (Urdu), p. 25. This ceremony varies for different castes and for different purposes, but usually takes place between the age of seven and ten, but may be postponed till the age of 16 in the case of a Brahman, 22 in the case of a Kshatriya and 24 for a Vaisya in special circumstances. Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 198-204 ; P. Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 90 ; Majumdar, *op. cit.*, pp. 345-47.
34. R and B, I, p. 357.
35. "The girdle of a Brahman was made of *munja* grass, that of a Kshatriya of a bow-string and that of a Vaisya of wool." Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 224 ; Dubois, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 167.
36. Guru Nanak refers to it. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, I, p. 17 ; Careri (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 259 ; Pyard, I, pp. 372-73. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 392. Brahman should have a girdle of *munja* grass, Kshatriya of *kusa* grass and Vaisya of *urna-sutra*, *avisutra*, hemper of *murva* fibres. Majumdar, *op. cit.*, p. 346.
37. R. and B., I, p. 357 ; *Ain*, III, p. 274 ; Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 224 ; J.A. Dubois, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 167. Guru

- Nanak refers to the ceremony of killing and cooking goat on such an occasion. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, I, p. 1.
38. The scriptures provide that cotton cords should be worn by the Brahmans, woollen by the Kshatriyas and linen by the Vaisyas. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 225.
  39. About one pice of Indian money. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
  40. Della Valle, I, pp. 88-89 and f.n. 3, p. 88 ; Jahangir (R and B, I, p. 357) wrongly says that it was hung on the right shoulder. For other contemporary references see *Ain*, III, pp. 128, 272-73 ; Purchas' *India*, p. 112 ; Chaitanya (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 259 ; Herbert's *Travels*, p. 46. When a person decided to take up the life of a casteless homeless *Sannyasi* he would destroy his sacred thread and the tuft of hair on the crest of his head. Sarkar, *Chaitanya*, p. 29.
  41. *Ain*, III, pp. 272-73.
  42. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 226 ; Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 165-88 ; J.A. Dubois, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 165-88 ; *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XXXI (1902), p. 216.
  43. Careri (Sen, *op. cit.*) p. 260 : Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 260. According to one authority, the triple cord symbolizes body, speech and mind and a person has got control over these when the knots are tied. Dubois, *op. cit.*, I, p. 260. Also see Majumdar, *op. cit.*, pp. 346-47.
  44. For its symbolism and significance see Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 226.
  45. Growse, *op. cit.*, p. 102 ; *Padmavat* (Urdu), p. 25. The details refer to P.N. Chopra, *Society and Culture during the Mughal Age*, p. 120. Also see R.C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, Vol. I, pp. 599-600.
  46. *Sur Sagar*, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 1317-18.
  47. Phillips, *An Account of the Religion, Manners and Learning of the People of Malabar*, pp. 67-69.
  48. *Ibid.* ; Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 187-260. Isan Nagara, the author of the *Advaitaprakasa*, composed in A.D. 1540, describes in detail the initiation ceremony of the son of Advaita Acharya at Santipura. *Indian Culture*, Vol. X, No. 3 (Jan.-March 1944). There is a

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reference to this ceremony in *Chaitanya Bhagavata* (i, 5, 27).

49. Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 249-60 and R.C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, Vol. I, p. 600.
50. *Storia*, III, p. 150 ; Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 17. Burhan's *Tuzuk-i-Walajahi*, English translation by Muhammad Husayn Nainar. pt. I, p. 19. For Hindus see *Indian Culture*, Vol. X, No. 3, Jan.-March, 1944, pp. 92, 99. "The Maratha Poet-Saint Dasopant Digamber" by Justin E. Abbot in *Journal of American Oriental Society*, Vol. 42, pp. 267-68.
51. Herklots' *Islam in India*, pp. 17-18.
52. *A.N.*, II, pp. 350-51, tr., II, pp. 510-11 ; *T.A.*, II, pp. 358, 361.
53. Gulbadan, *Humayunnama*, p. 9.
54. *Storia*, II, p. 343. *A.N.*, II, pp. 345-48 ; Tr., II, pp. 504-8. There were festivities for seven days on the birth of Jahangir. *T.A.*, II, (trans.), p. 358. A beautiful painting in "A Catalogue of the Indian Miniatures" by Sir Thomas W. Arnold revised and edited by J.V.S. Wilkinson, Vol. II, Plate No. 21 shows "Akbar rejoicing at the birth of Salim." Plates Nos. 22 and 23 show "Akbar receiving congratulations on the birth of Murad." Also see Plates III-VI of "A Catalogue of Indian Collections" Part VI, Mughal Painting.
55. *Storia*, III, p. 150. For beautiful paintings depicting the birth of a prince see plates III-VI of Catalogue of Indian Collections in Boston Museum, Part VI by K. Coomaraswamy.
56. *Aqiqah* literally means "the hair of the new-born" but the term has been applied by Metonymy to the shaving sacrifice usually observed on the seventh day. Two goats for a boy and one goat for a girl are sacrificed on this day. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 50 ; Hastings' *Encyclopaedia*, II, p. 659 ; Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 38 ; Mrs. Meer Hassan Ali's *Mussulmauns of India*, Vol. II, p. 9.
57. For various observances on this day see Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 51 ; Hastings, *op. cit.*, II, p. 659 ; Herklots' *Islam in India*, pp. 21-23 ; also see H.A. Rose's article on

- "Muhammadan Birth Observances in the Punjab" pp. 237-60 in *J.R.A.I.*, Vol. XXXVII, 1907.
58. Lit. "pronouncing the name of God," i.e., to recite the inscription which occurs at the commencement of the *Quran*—"Bismillah-ir-rahman-ir-rahim": In the name of God the Merciful, the Gracious. Crookes' *Islam in India*, pp. 43-44.
59. Arabic *Khitna* or *Khatna*. Usually the operation is performed between the ages of seven or ten years, but it is lawful to circumcise a child seven days after the birth. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 51. Hastings' *Encyclopaedia*, *op. cit.*, II, 660; III, p. 659. Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 48; Mrs. Meer Hassan Ali's *Mussulmauns in India*, Vol. II, p. 12. Also see G.B. Frazer, *The Magic Art*, I, p. 96. The authenticity of a tradition allowing circumcision has been disputed. For information on this topic see *Punjab Notes and Queries*, Vol. I, p. 86; E.R.E., II, p. 223; Vol. III, pp. 667 ff; Bray Deny's *The Life History of a Brahui and A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and N.W.F.P.*, Vol. I, pp. 778 ff; II, p. 228. Also *J.R.A.I.*, Vol. XXXVII, p. 255. According to Muhammad Shah-dullah, the custom of circumcision prevailed among the Dravidians. He quotes passages from the *Kamasutra* and Vatsyayana in support of his theory. *J.A.S.B.*, New Series, Vol. XVII, 1921, pp. 237-60.
60. For various customs borrowed from the Hindus see Herklots' *Islam in India*, Chapters II-IX. Also *J.R.A.I.*, Vol. XXXVII (1907), pp. 237-60.
61. *Maasir*, p. 169.
62. For the various modes of cord-cutting followed in India see Herklots' *Islam in India*, pp. 22-23.
63. *Storia*, II, p. 346.
64. *Ibid.* Also notice Akbar's instructions to convey Prince Danial to Amber when he was a month old. *A.N.*, II, p. 345; Tr., II, p. 505.
65. *A.N.*, I, p. 43; Tr., I, p. 129. This custom was perhaps borrowed from the Hindus.
66. Jahangir relates this custom. *Tuzuk* (Lowe), pp. 16, 28.
67. *Mirat-i-Sikandri* (trans.), p. 121.
68. For Akbar's horoscope see *A.N.*, I, pp. 27-28, 43 and

- 232-33 ; and Tr., I, pp. 36, 129 and 464 ; and *A.N.*, II, p. 347 ; Tr., II, p. 507 ; *T.A.*, II, p. 505. For Jahangir's horoscope *A.N.*, II, p. 347 ; Tr., II, p. 507. For a painting showing astrologers casting the horoscope of a prince on his birth, see A Catalogue of Indian Collections, pt. VI, *Mughal Painting*—by A.K. Coomaraswamy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Cambridge, 1930, Plates III-VI. For Murad's horoscope *A.N.*, II, p. 356 ; Tr., II, p. 515.
69. *A.N.*, II, p. 345 ; Tr., II, p. 505.
- 69.\* Rahim, M.A., *Social and Cultural History of Bengal*, pp. 280-81.
70. Sometimes it is observed on that day. Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 26 ; Hughes' *Dictionary*, p. 51 ; Hastings, *op. cit.*, II, p. 659.
71. *Storia*, II, p. 343. Immediately after her birth Jahanara was presented with due ceremonies to Jahangir to receive name. G. Yazdani, "Jahanara," *Journal of Punjab Historical Society*, Vol. X, p. 1.
72. Smith, *Akbar*, p. 18 f. Later on he was renamed Jalal-ud-din Akbar. Nizamuddin, however, mentions the name of Jalal ud-din given to Akbar just after his birth. *T.A.*, II (trans.), p. 92.
- 72.\* *John Marshall in India*, p. 405. Also see Rahim, M.A., *Social and Cultural History of Bengal*.
- 72.+ *Ain*, II (Urdu Trans.), p. 290 quoted in *Burhan*, March 1969.
73. *Storia*, II, p. 346 ; *Ain*, I, p. 267 ; E. & D., V, p. 307.
74. *Ain*, I, pp. 266-67 ; Badaoni, II, p. 84 ; Tr., II, p. 85 ; Thevenot, Chapt. xxvi, p. 47 ; De Laet, pp. 101-2 ; Mandelslo, p. 42. For details see *Early Travels*, p. 119 ; Roe's *Embassy*, pp. 378-80 (1926 edition) ; Della Valle, p. 459 ; Manrique, pp. 200-4 ; Mandelslo, p. 42 Tavernier, p. 122 ; *Storia*, II, p. 348 ; Bernier, p. 272 ; Thevenot, xxvi, p. 47 ; *Qanun-i-Humayun*, p. 76 ; *Ain*, I (1873), pp. 266-67 ; R and B, I, pp. 78, 115, 160 ; *Padshahnama*, I, p. 243 ; *M.A.*, p. 51.
75. See a beautiful painting (Plate No. 33) showing "Akbar being weighed" in a *Catalogue of the Indian Miniatures*, by Sir Thomas W. Arnold revised and edited by J.V.S. Wilkinson, Vol. II.



76. Sarkar, *History of Aurangzib*, III, pp. 85-86.
77. *Ain*, I, p. 267 f.n. ; R & B, I, p. 115 ; Sharma's *Bibliography*, p. 19.
78. For various rites observed on this day, see Crookes' *Islam in India*, pp. 36-37 ; *J.R.A.I.* (1907), Vol. XXXVI, p. 244.
79. *Storia*, III, p. 150.
80. *Ibid.*
81. Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 36.
82. *Ibid.*
83. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 51 ; Hastings' *E.R.E.*, Vol. II, p. 659 ; Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 38. In South India and Punjab it is observed on the sixth day or put off to some other convenient date. Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 38 ; *J.R.A.I.*, *op. cit.*, p. 244.
84. Azad, *Darbar-i-Akbari* (Urdu), pp. 7-8.
85. *A.N.*, I, p. 194 ; Tr., I, 397.
86. Azad, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
87. Hughes, *Dictionary*, p. 51 ; Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 44.
88. For Jahangir see *A.N.* (Bev.), III, pp. 105-6 ; *T.A.*, II, pp. 423-24 ; E. and D., V, p. 370 ; Badaoni (Lowe), II, p. 173.
89. *Travels in India in the 17th Century* (p. 281) refers to the observance of this custom. According to Sir Saiyid all the Mughal Emperors up to the time of Humayun had been actually circumcised. Akbar, owing to the adverse circumstances of his father, when he was born, could not be circumcised. Later on, he was far advanced in age for that ceremony. (Refer to Latif, *Agra : Historical and Descriptive*, Calcutta, 1896, p. 205, f.n.) Both Abul Fazl and Nizam-ud-din, however, refute this assertion.
90. Jahangir was circumcised at Fatehpur in 1573 A.D. There were great festivities and all the nobles, sayyids and shaikhs were invited. *T.A.*, II (trans), p. 422 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 281. Akbar's age at that time was three years and some months. Gulbadan writes five years, *M.A.* and *Mirat-i-Jahan-Numa* and *Tazkirat-us-Salatin-i-Chaghtai*, two years and ten months ; S.K. Banerji, *Humayun Badshah*, II, p. 152, f.n. i.
91. Ashraf, *Life and Condition of the People of Hindustan*, p. 249.

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92. *A.N.* (Bev.), III, pp. 102-3 ; *T.A.* in *E. & D.*, V, p. 370 ; Badaoni (Lowe), II, p. 173 ; Roe (ed. Foster), p. 313 ; Coryat and Salbancke (*Letters Received by East India Company*, VI, pp. 183-85) wrongly assert that Jahangir was never circumcised. According to Salbancke (*Ibid.*) and Sir Roe (ed. Foster, p. 312), the term Mughal meant circumcised. For circumcision ceremony of the sons of Nizam-ul-Mulk of Deccan refer to *Hadiqatul Alam* by Mir Abu Turab, Vol. II, Haiderabad, p. 71.
93. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 207.
94. Fryer (old edition), p. 94.
95. *Storia*, II, p. 221.
96. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 261 ; Dubois, I, p. 208 ; Altekar, *Position of Women*, p. 37.
97. Even the marriage ceremonies have found expression in the *Rig-veda* and the *Atharv-veda*. Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 261, 264.
98. *Storia*, III, p. 54 ; Herbert's *Travels*, p. 31.
99. Orme's *Fragments* (1805), p. 408 ; T. V. Mahalingam, *Social Life under Vijyanagar*, University of Madras, 1940.
100. Usually Brahman priests. Hedges' *Diary*, II, p. ccciv ; Stavorinus, I, p. 433.
101. M.G. Orr, *A Sixteenth Century Indian Mystic—Dadu and His Followers*, p. 37.
102. Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 56.
103. *Ibid.*
104. *A.N.*, III (Bev.), p. 677.
105. For deterioration of Hindu society during medieval times refer to Altekar, *Position of Women in India*, pp. 68-73 ; Grose, I, p. 194 ; *First Englishmen in India*, p. 102.
106. P.N. Chopra, *Society and Culture during the Mughal Age*, p. 111.
107. Quoted in Altekar's *Position of Women*, p. 73.
108. Chopra, *op. cit.*, p. 112.
109. Ralph Fitch, *First Englishmen in India*, p. 102 ; Herbert's *Travels*, p. 38 ; Terry, *Early Travels*, p. 221 ; Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 84 ; Thevenot, Chapt. XLVIII, p. 83 ; Linschoten, I, p. 249 ; Mandelslo, p. 51 ; Grose, *A Voyage to the East Indies*, I, pp. 193-94 ; Phillips' *Account of Malabar*, *op. cit.*, p. 103 ; Tavernier, II, p. 197. Also

- see Altekar's *Position of Women*, p. 68 ; T.V. Mahalingam, *Vijayanagar Administration*, p. 257 ; Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, Vol. I, p. 602.
110. *Padmavat* (Urdu), p. 96.
  111. *Bhartiya Vidya*, Feb. 1945, Vol. VI, No. 2 (New Series), p. 23.
  112. The Emperor was of the opinion that off-spring of such early marriages was weakling. *Ain*, I, (1873), pp. 195, 203 ; Azad, *Darbar-i-Akbari*, pp. 79-80.
  113. Badaoni, II, p. 391-92 ; Tr., II, p. 404-6.
  114. Jahangir was no doubt of the view that the marriage should not take place before the age of 12. But he did not enforce it. *A.N.*, III, pp. 381-84 ; Tr., III, pp. 561-66.
  115. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 185 ; Linschoten (I, Hak. Soc., p. 249), writes : "When the woman is seven years old and the man nine years, they do marry, but they come not together before the woman be strong enough to bear children." *Storia*, III, p. 65 ; *First Englishmen in India*, p. 101.
  116. Ferishta (Briggs), II, p. 380.
  117. Bartolomeo, p. 275.
  118. *Storia*, III, p. 65 ; Bartolomeo (p. 275) writes : "Bridegroom after the betrothal returns home and the *kanya* is left at her own house, for the consummation does not actually take place till the bride has had her monthly purifications...." Even Altekar observes that post-puberty marriages continued as local custom and in some of the areas that continued to be under the influence of the old pre-Aryan culture, for example in Malabar. Altekar, *op. cit.*, p. 69.
  119. Khurram was 17 years old when his marriage to the daughter of Muzaffar Husain Mirza was celebrated in 1610. His second marriage with Arjumand Banu came off at the age of 20 years 3 months. R. & B., I, p. 224, f.n. 2. Dara Shukoh was over 18 when he was married. K.R. Qanungo, *Dara Shukoh*, pp. 13 and 9. Aurangzeb was married at the age of 18 years 7 months (Sarkar, *Studies in Aurangzib's Reign*, pp. 1-2), Kam Bakhsh at the age of 14 (*Ibid.*) and Prince Muhammad Azam at the age

- of 15½ years (*Ibid.*, p. 62). Amongst Aurangzeb's sons, Muhammad Akbar was married before he was 15 (Sarkar, *Aurangzib*, Vol. III, p. 52), and Muhammad Sultan at the age of 20 years (*Ibid.*, p. 44). As regards others, Guru Nanak was 14 years old when married to Sulakhani, daughter of Mula (Macauliffe, Vol. I, pp. 18-19). Sayed Ghulam Husain Khan, author of *Siyarul Mutakherin* was married to his maternal cousin at the age of 18. *Calcutta Review*, Vol. 84, No. I, July 1942, p. 75.
120. The marriage was thought to be unlawful "if the genealogical lines of either of the paternal and maternal ancestry unite within fifth degree of ascent, if in the two paternal genealogies they unite in any generation, if in the paternal genealogies of both parties consanguinity through female occurs in the sixth generation by mother's side." *Ain*, III, p. 310. It was from 10th century that inter-caste marriages began to go out of fashion. Altekar, *op. cit.*, p. 90. Gardizi wrote in 1048 A.D. : "The Indians are very fastidious in maintaining the rules of relationship and will not take a wife from anywhere or give a girl away unless the match suits their origin." *B.S.O.S.* London, Vol. XII, 1948, p. 627. For contemporary accounts see *Early Travels*, p. 221 ; Orme's *Fragments*, p. 415 ; Herbert's *Travels*, p. 45 ; Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 255.
  121. *A.N.* (Bev.), III, p. 677 ; Orme's *Fragments*, pp. 415, 465 ; Thevenot, p. 67 ; Herbert's *Travels* p. 45 ; Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 306-14 ; Dubois, I, p. 214 ; Stavorinus, I, p. 410. When Tukaram's daughters were of marriageable age he selected boys of his own caste and got them married. *J.R.A.S.* (Bombay), Vol. VII, p. 21.
  122. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 339.
  123. Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 255.
  124. *Storia*, III, p. 55.
  125. Some provincial social customs and manners mentioned as *duracaras* by Varadaraja (A pupil of Bhattoji Diksita (A.D. 1600-60) in *Bhartiya Vidya*, Feb. 1945, Vol. VI, No. 2 (New Series), p. 28.
  126. The prohibited degrees include consanguinity—mother, grandmother, sister, niece, aunt, etc., affinity—mother-in-

- law, step daughters, grand-daughters, etc., foster-age, with wife's sister during lifetime of the wife unless she is divorced of the wife of another until the period of probation (*Iddat*) has expired, three months after divorce, four months ten days after widowhood with polytheists who do not include Jews or Christians. Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 56.
127. The first notable marriage of this kind before Humayun and Hamida Banu was of Babur and Mehar Begum. *Indian Culture*, IV, No. 1 (1937).
  128. Outwardly Ruhullah Khan had adopted Sunnism to please the orthodox Aurangzeb and also wrote in his will that his two daughters be wedded to Sunnis. Aurangzeb ordered : "Give his elder daughter to Prince Muhammad Azim and the younger to Siadat Khan." The latter submitted : "This hereditary servant is unwilling to marry Ruhullah Khan's daughter. How do we know that she, too, holds the creed of the Sunnis ? In case she presses in her own faith what can I do ?" J.N. Sarkar, *Anecdotes of Aurangzeb*, p. 122.
  129. Marriages between first cousins (may be children of brothers and sisters) is considered very suitable. Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 52.
  130. *Ain*, I, p. 217 ; E.R.E., VII, pp. 866-67 and Vol. V, p. 743.
  131. *A.N.*, III, p. 245 ; Tr., III, p. 352.
  132. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 339.
  133. Varadaraja, pupil of Bhattoji Diksita (A.D. 1600-60), refers to it. *Bhartiya Vidya*, Vol. V, No. 2, p. 28.
  134. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 336 ; *Storia*, III, p. 55 ; *Ain*, II, p. 311.
  135. Though Humayun was 19 years older than Hamida at the time of marrying, she did not raise that question. She, however, objected to his tall stature. S.K. Banerji, *Humayun Badshah*, Vol. II, 1941, p. 37.
  136. *Ain*, I, p. 277 ; Badaoni, II, pp. 391-92 ; Tr., pp. 404-6.
  137. Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 84.
  138. Hamilton, I, 159 ; Della Valle (Edward Grey), I, p. 83. Also see Herbert's *Travels*, p. 39. Guru Nanak also refers to monogamy when he writes to Kabir : "Father,

dear it is God who arrangeth marriages. He maketh no mistakes and those whom He hath once joined, He joineth forever." Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, I, p. 100.

139. *Ain*, III, p. 311 ; Mandelslo, p. 52. A second wife is allowed if the first dies and the second is usually "a maid of the same race or tribe." (Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 248), Chaitanya remarried after the death of his first wife. *The Chaitanya Movement* by Melville T. Kennedy, p. 16. For custom in Malabar, see Phillip's *Account of East India*, p. 27.
140. *J.R.A.S.*, Bombay, Vol. VII, p. 15.
141. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 311.
142. Badaoni, II, p. 208 ; Tr., II, p. 212.
143. Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 248 ; Mandelslo, p. 52 ; Stavorinus, I. p. 440 ; Della Valle (Edward Grey), I, p. 83 ; Herbert's *Travels*, p. 36 ; Hamilton, I, p. 159.
- 143\* *Bharat Chandra—Annadamangala* quoted in Rahim, M.A., *op. cit.*, p. 285.
144. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 314. "Of women who seem good in your eyes, marry two or three or four and if you still fear that ye shall not act equitably then one only or the slaves whom ye may have acquired." (*Quran*, *Surah* iv, 3). Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 86 ; E.R.E., V, p. 742 under Family (Muslim).
145. Badaoni, II, pp. 208-9 ; Tr., II, p. 212.
146. *Ain* (Bloch), p. 277.
147. Badaoni, II, p. 356 ; Tr., II, p. 357.
148. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 185.
149. Careri (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 248.
150. *Mutah* marriages were considered legal, according to Imam Malik, but Imam Shafi looked upon them as illegal. Badaoni, II, pp. 208-9 ; Tr., II, p. 212.
151. Badaoni, II, pp. 208-9 ; Tr., II, p. 212.
152. Hamilton's *East Indies*, I, p. 159. Sometimes a sister would be married by her brother without the permission of the guardian, which was, however, disliked. *T.A.*, II, p. 291.
153. *Storia*, III, p. 55. Padmavati also refers to it. *Padmavati* (Urdu), p. 148. In the absence of the parents or on their

demise the nearest relations or intimate friends did the job.

154. It is interesting to recall the incident of Humayun's marriage to Hamida Banu in this connection. Hamida, a girl of tender years, "resisted, discussed and disagreed for 40 days to a proposal for marriage from Humayun as the latter happened to be a tall person." The marriage ultimately came through the mediation of Dildar Begam. This was a very rare case when the childish objections of a minor girl were respected and only persuasions were applied to obtain her consent. This may be partly due to the fact that the girl was a relation of the Emperor and partly because of the instigation of Askari. For details refer to *J.U.P. Hist. Soc.*, Vol. VII, Pt. I, Jan. 1934, pp. 36-41 and *Journal Sind Historical Society*, August 1940, Vol. IV, No. 4, pp. 149-99. When Hazrat Begam, the daughter of Muhammad Shah, reached her 16th year (February 1756), Alamgir II who was 60 years old demanded her in marriage. The reply of the girl was : "I prefer death to such a marriage. I regard you as my father and you, too, should look upon me in the same light as your three daughters. If you use force, I shall kill myself." Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Calcutta, 1934, Vol. II, p. 4.
155. Badaoni, II, p. 62 ; Tr., II, pp. 60-61.
156. Sanyal, *Chaitanya*, pp. 365-66. Jayasi refers to mediatory Pandits. *Padmavat* (Urdu), p. 146.
157. *Storia*, III, p. 155.
158. *Ibid*, p. 152.
159. *Ain*, I (1873), p. 277.
160. *Ibid.*, p. 278.
161. *Ibid*.
162. *Tatimma-i-Wakiat-i-Jahangiri* by Muhammad Hadi. E.&D. Vol. VI, pp. 396-97.
163. Sarkar, *Aurangzib*, III, p. 55.
164. *Ibid*. Arjumand Banu was 19 years and one month old when her marriage to Khurram took place. R. and B., I, p. 224, f.n. 2. Mihr-un-Nissa and Zubdat-un-Nissa, daughters of Aurangzeb, were married to Izad Baksh and Sipihr Shukoh at the ages of 12 and 23 years respectively.

- Irvine, *Later Mughals*, pp. 2-3 ; Sarkar, *Aurangzib*, Vol. III, p. 55.
165. For contemporary accounts refer to 'A Few Literary Glimpses of Social and Religious Life in Medieval Bengal,' *Indian Culture*, Vol. X, No. 3, January-March 1944, p. 92 ; Hedges' *Diary*, pp. cccx (Hak. edition) ; Antonio Bocarro's 'Description of Sind' translated and annotated by Fr. Achilles Meers, *Journal Sind Historical Society*, August 1949 ; Grose, I, pp. 234-35.
166. Hedges' *Diary*, p. cccx.
167. Grose, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 234-35.
168. *Journal Sind Historical Society*, August 1940. The well-to-do would spend about forty or fifty thousand rupees.
169. Grose, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 234-35.
170. Qanungo, *Dara Shukoh*, p. 14.
171. *Padmavat* (Urdu), p. 140.
172. *Ibid.*, p. 141 ; *Storia*, III, p. 59 ; Bartolomeo, p. 273 ; Bernier, pp. 161-62 ; *Tulsi's Ramayana*, p. 150. Hindus as well as Muhammadans consider some months to be inauspicious. Mrs. Meer Hassan Ali, *Observations on the Mussulmauns of India*, I, pp. 352-53.
173. *J.U.P. Hist. Soc.*, Vol. VII, Pt. I, January 1934.
174. *Storia*, III, p. 59.
175. T.V. Mahalingam, *Social Life Under Vijayanagar*, University of Madras, 1940.
176. *Ain*, III, pp. 338-39.
177. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 375.
178. Macauliffe, I, p. 145.
179. *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 175.
180. *Storia*, III, p. 62 ; *Padmavat* (Urdu), p. 147 ; *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 158 ; *Sur Sagar*, I, p. 631.
181. *Padmavat* (Urdu), p. 147.
182. *Storia*, III, p. 62.
183. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
184. Qanungo, *Dara Shukoh*, pp. 14-15.
185. For a picturesque description of a contemporary marriage procession refer to *Storia*, III, pp. 150-51 ; *Jahangir's India*, p. 83 ; Della Valle, I (ed. 1664), pp. 430-31 ; Mandelslo, p. 62 ; Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 248. For a wedding procession refer to Plate LXII of the Catalogue of Indian



- Collection in Boston Museum, Pt. VI by Coomaraswamy.
186. Della Valle (edition 1664), pp. 430-31.
  187. *Jahangir's India*, p. 83.
  188. Careri refers to their "vests and civas dyed in zafran."  
Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 248.
  189. Della Valle (edition 1664), pp. 430-31 ; Sen, *op. cit.*,  
p. 248.
  190. Della Valle, II (ed. Edward Grey), p. 428.
  191. Bartolomeo, p. 280.
  192. *Storia*, III, pp. 150-51 ; Mandelslo, p. 62.
  193. *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 153 ; *Padmavat* (Urdu),  
p. 144.
  194. *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse,) pp. 157, 162 ; *Storia*, III,  
p. 57.
  195. *Padmavat* (Urdu), pp. 145-47.
  196. *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), pp. 157, 162.
  197. *Storia*, III, p. 57.
  198. Altekar, *Position of Women*, pp. 94-95 ; Ishuree Dass,  
*Domestic Manners and Customs of the Hindoos*, pp. 180-81.  
For the detailed accounts of the ceremonies refer to  
Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 345-57 ; Thomas, *Hindu Religion*,  
*Customs and Manners*, pp. 92-93 ; Sinclair Stevenson,  
*Rites of the Twice Born*, pp. 46-95 ; Dubois, I, pp. 208-37 ;  
*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VIII, pp. 450-  
51 ; Sarkar, *History of Bengal*, Vol. II, p. 605. For  
contemporary versions refer to *Ramayana of Tulsidas*,  
pp. 156-58, 175 ; *Padmavat* (Urdu), pp. 141-49 ; *Sur Sagar*  
*op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 631-32 ; *Ain*, III, 307-8. Chaitanya's  
biography written several years after his death may not  
contain a reliable account of the rituals. Refer to  
*Shree Krishna Chaitanya*, Vol. I, by Nisikanta Sanyal  
Bhaktishastri, Pub. Tridandi Swami Bhakti, 1933, pp. 368-  
69. For a few references in Tukaram's verses see *Psalms*  
*of Maratha Saints* by Nicol Macnicol, pp. 56-58. For  
European travellers' contemporary accounts refer to  
Herbert's *Travels*, p. 45 ; *Storia*, III, pp. 55, 62, 150-51 ;  
Hamilton's *East Indies*, I, p. 159 ; *Jahangir's India* by  
Pelsaert, p. 82 ; Grose, I, pp. 234-35 ; Della Valle (1664),  
pp. 430-31 ; Careri (Sen), p. 248 ; Bartolomeo, p. 280 ;  
Mandelslo, p. 62.

199. Called *vari* in Punjab.
200. *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 158.
201. *Padmavat* (Urdu), pp. 147-49.
202. *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), pp. 156-58.
203. *Sur Sagar*, I, pp. 631-32 ; II, pp. 1665, 1671, 1678.
204. For accounts of European travellers refer to f.n. 198 above.
205. E.R.E., VIII, pp. 450-51 ; *Padmavat* (Urdu), pp. 147-48 ; *Ain*, III (Sarkar), pp. 337-42 ; *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), pp. 157, 162.
206. *Padmavat* (Urdu), p. 148.
207. *Storia*, III, pp. 54, 63.
208. Bartolomeo, pp. 273, 281 ; Dubois, I, pp. 226-27.
209. M.N. Srinivas (*Marriage and Family in Mysore*, Bombay, 1942, p. 75) describes *tali* as a small plate of gold with a dome-like eruption in the middle crowned by a ruby. It is considered to prolong the life of the husband. Dubois, I, pp. 226-27.
210. *Storia*, III, p. 63.
211. *Padmavat* (Urdu), p. 162.
- 211.\* Rahim, M.A., *Social and Cultural History of Bengal*.
212. It has been described in the last paragraph, Pt. I, *Punjab Civil Code* (ed. 1854).
213. *Journal Punjab Historical Society*, Vol. X, pp. 1-3.
214. The custom was in vogue in the Utradhi also Dakhna and Dahra Sects of Arora community of Multan. *Ibid*.
215. A coconut of (or sent by) the house of Emperor Akbar.  
A coconut of (or sent by) the house of Raja Todar Mal Tanan.  
A coconut of (or sent by) the house of Misr Chhabildas.  
A coconut of (or sent by) the house of Kishne Mangle.  
A coconut of (or sent by) the house of Rain Ram Prithvipat Narule.  
*Journal Punjab Hist. Soc.* Vol. X, pp. 1-3. The Khatris of Bahawalpur also observed this custom (*Bahawalpur Gazetteer*, 1904, p. 114). But since 1922, on account of Hindu-Muslim tensions, they changed one sentence "Akbar Shah Badshah de ghar da narial." *J.P. Hist. Soc.* Vol. X, p. 3.
216. *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 161.
217. Purchas' *India*, p. 9. For Nayar's marriage customs refer to *Asiatick Researches*, Vol. V, pp. 13-14. Sometimes the

- bride's price was paid. See Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 257. For marriage customs of Korkus of the forest villages of Melghat refer to *J.R.A.S.B. Letters*, Vol. XII, 1946, No. 2.
218. For modern works refer to Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 318 ; Herklots' *Islam*, pp. 56-88 ; E.R.E., Vol. VII, pp. 815-59. Mrs Meer Husain Ali *Observations on the Mussulmauns of India*, pp. 367-69. According to the *Quran* and the traditions, marriage depends on three facts: the assent of the parties, the evidence of two witnesses and the marriage settlement. If any of these is wanting, the marriage is void. Herklots' *Islam*, p. 79. For a beautiful painting refer to Shivalal, *Studies in Indian Painting*, p. 107, Plate No. 48.
219. *Jahangir's India*, p. 82.
220. Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, pp. 31-33.
221. *Storia*, III, p. 152.
222. R. and B., I, pp. 159, 224-25 ; *Padshahnama*, I, A, pp. 328, 453 ; Qanungo : *Dara Shukoh*, p. 14.
223. *Jahangir's India*, p. 82.
- 223.\* Rahim, M.A. *Social and Cultural History of Bengal* pp. 286-87.
224. *Jahangir's India*. "Amongst the bride's presents with *mehndi* may be noticed everything requisite for a full-dress suit for the bridegroom, and the etcetras of his *toilette*, confectionery, dried fruits, preserves, the prepared pawns, and a multitude of trifles too tedious to enumerate." Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 319.
225. R & B., I, p. 159.
- 225\*. Subah-ul-Din, *Hindustan Ke Musalman Hukamrano ke Ahd ke Tamadani Jalwai*, p. 504.
226. Herklots' *Islam*, p. 70.
227. Qanungo, *Dara Shukoh*, pp. 14-15.
228. *Ibid.*
229. With this is usually combined the rubbing with *haldi* or turmeric. Herklots' *Islam*, p. 66.
230. *Ibid.* *Kamarbands* were offered to the guests on Dara's marriage.
231. *Storia*, III, p. 152.

232. Qazi Muhammad Ishan officiated at the marriage ceremony of Dara. Qanungo, *Dara Shukoh*, pp. 14-15.
233. Herklots' *Islam*, p. 74; Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 318 *Badshahnama* refers to the prevalent custom that the father of the bride was not expected to be present at the time of the *nikah*. *Badshahnama*, I, Pt. II, p. 270.
234. i.e., "I claim forgiveness from God." Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 318,
235. *Ibid.*, p. 318 ; Herklots' *Islam*, pp. 75-76.
236. *Storia*, III, p. 152. This term originally meant the price which was paid to the *wali* (guardian) of the bride. E.R.E., VII, p. 865. For details refer to *Ibid.*, pp. 865-66 ; *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 743.
237. *J.U.P. Hist. Soc.*, Vol. VII, Pt. I, Jan. 1934, p. 38. Hindal is reported to have said, "Heaven forbid, there should not be a proper *maash* and that so a cause of annoyance should arise." *Ibid.* Rs. 2 lakhs was paid by Humayun as *mahr*. *Ibid.*, pp. 36-41. According to another version, Humayun gave Rs 3 lakhs of ready cash for the dower. *J. Sind Hist. Soc.* August, 1940, Vol. IV, No. 4. For another controversial point whether the above-mentioned sum was given as a dower or as a fee to the *Qazi*, Mir Abul Baqa, refer to f.n. 3 of S.K. Banerji, *Humayun Badshah*, Vol. II, p. 37.
238. Qanungo, *Dara Shukoh*, pp. 14-15. On Salim's marriage to the daughter of Raja Bhagwan Dass, Akbar fixed a sum of two *krors* of *tangahs* as the marriage settlement. (*T.A.*, II, p. 599 ; *A.N.*, Bev., pp. 677-78). *Maasir*, I, p. 404, writes two *krors* of rupees.
239. Mandelslo, p. 62 ; Herklots' *Islam*, pp. 77-78.
- 239.\* Rahim, M.A. *Social and Cultural History of Bengal*, p. 287.
240. Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 248 ; Mandelslo, p. 62 ; *Storia*, III, p. 152 ; Herbert's *Travels*, p. 45 ; Bartolomeo. p. 272.
241. Macauliffe, I, p. 145 ; *J.R.A.S.* (Bombay), III, p. 15 : Sanyal, *Chaitanya*, p. 366.
242. Bartolomeo, p. 272 ; *J.P.U. Hist. Soc.* Vol. V., April 1938. p. 27.
243. Macauliffe, I, p. 145. A man in straitened circumstances

- appealed to Guru Nanak to procure a wedding outfit for his daughter. *Ibid.*
244. Tukaram in *J.R.A.S.* (Bombay), III, p. 15.
  245. Sanyal, *Chaitanya*, p. 366.
  246. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 281.
  247. *Padmavat* (Urdu), pp. 148, 203.
  248. *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 159. "The enormous dowry was beyond description—gold and jewels, shawls, robes, and silks of all kinds in the greatest profusion and of immense value, elephants, chariots, horses, men servants and cows with gilded horns and hoofs." *Ibid.*
  249. *Sur Sagar*, II, p. 1664.
  250. *Maasir*, I, p. 404; *T.A.*, II, p. 599; *A.N.*, III (Bev.), pp. 677-78; Badaoni, II, pp. 342-43; *Tr.*, II, pp. 353-54.
  251. For an earlier reference in Tamil refer to Saletore's *Vijayanagar*, Vol. II, pp. 188-89.
  252. *Ain* (Bloch), I, p. 278; Bartolomeo (p. 272) a little later laments the lot of those parents whose daughters could not be married as they could not afford to pay high dowries.
  253. Sarkar's, *Aurangzib*, III, p. 54.
  254. The Baudhayana Pitremedha Sutras says: "It is well-known that through the *Samskaras* after birth one conquers earth, through the *Samskaras* after death the heaven." Quoted in Pandey's, *Hindu Samskaras*, p. 407; *E.R.E.*, IV, p. 476.
  255. Caland divides the whole ceremonial into 114 acts not to speak of variations in each of these. For details refer to *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. IV, pp. 476-78; Sinclair Stevenson, *Rites of the Twice Born*, pp. 136 ff and Pandey, *op. cit.*
  256. The earliest literary mention of the funeral ceremonies is found in the *Rig-Veda* and *Atharva-Veda*. Also see Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 421. Cremation is regarded as offering into the sacred fire conducting the corpse to heaven as a sacrificial gift. (*A.G.S.* IV, 1-2; *Bh. G.S.* 1-2) quoted in Pandey *op. cit.*, p. 443.
  257. *Early Travels*, p. 323.
  258. Ovington, p. 342. Also see Herbert's *Travels*, p. 46.

259. Abul Fazl enumerates the following classes which were not allowed to be cremated : "Those who disbelieve the Vedas, or who are not bound by the rules of any of the four castes, nor a thief, nor a woman who has murdered her husband, nor an evil liver nor a drunkard." *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 355. Manucci excludes the infamous sect of the lingam who bury the bodies. *Storia*, III, p. 71.
260. Or thrown into water. Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 34.
261. *Tavernier's Travels* (Crookes edited), p. 219. Also see *Ibid.*, f.n. 1 and f.n. 2, and E.T. Dalton's *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 9. Recent archaeological discoveries give us information about the burial of the dead. But their chronology is disputed. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 412.
262. J.T.P. Phillips writes in *Religion and Manners and Learning of Malabar* (1717), p. 35 : "They are buried in a sitting posture with the baby lifted up as if they were in an act of devotion which they call *Tschimadu*." Also see Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 249.
263. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 355 ; *Storia*, IV, p. 441.
264. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 417.
265. Mandelslo, p. 55 ; under two years, Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 34 ; Abul Fazl is more specific when he writes that dead bodies of all children yet not teetled and ascetics were either buried or plunged into flowing water. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 355.
266. Realized mendicants, *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 355.
267. For details of children's burial refer to Sinclair Stevenson, *Rites of the Twice Born*, p. 201 ; Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 417.
268. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 354. "The belief is that if a person were to die on a bedstead, he would return after death as an evil spirit since the bedstead is high up from the ground with space between earth and sky which demons inhabit." Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 142.
269. Usually *durbha* grass, barley and sesamum grains are scattered on the ground plastered with cow-dung and sprinkled over with the Ganges water. Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 142.
270. *Storia*, III, p. 72 ; Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 430.
271. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 354.

272. Herbert's *Travels*, p. 45 ; Samuel Purchas' *India*, p. 2.
273. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 354.
274. *Ibid.* It is only by holding the tail of a cow that the dying man hopes to cross the horrible river of blood and filth called *Vaitarani*. Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 141.
275. For details refer to Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 476 ; Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-41.
276. For reference to this custom see Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 142.
277. Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 249.
278. Tavernier, Chapter VII, p. 168.
279. Della Valle (1664 edition), p. 435.
280. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 354.
281. It is still prevalent in some parts of that province. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 431.
282. Tavernier, Chapter VII, p. 168, says up to the chin.
283. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 354. Ralph Fitch relates another interesting incident : "If a man or woman be sick and like to die they will lay him before their idol and he shall help him. Failing which he will take it to the riverside and set him on the raft made of weed." *Early Travels*, p. 22.
284. *Storia*, III, p. 72 ; *Ramayana* (Growse), p. 458.
285. Macauliffe, Vol. I, p. 115. "Those whose letters hath been torn in God's court must die, my brethren." *Ibid.*
286. Della Valle, Vol. II (Ed. Grey), p. 271 ; Petermundy, II, p. 220 ; Ovington, p. 243 ; *Storia*, III, p. 156.
287. Petermundy, II, p. 220.
288. Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 34. In Malabar the body of the king must be burnt within three days after his death. Nieuhoff's *Voyages*, p. 288.
289. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 439.
290. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 355 ; Tavernier, Chapter VII, p. 168 ; Herbert's *Travels*, p. 45 ; Alberuni, II, p. 169.
291. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 355, says white sheet of fine linen. Mrs. Sinclair writes as follows : "A middle-aged man is wrapped in red, a dearly loved young man in red brocade, a married woman usually in a gaily coloured garment but a widow invariably in white, blue or black cloth." Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 144.
292. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 355.

293. *Storia*, III, pp. 72, 155. If a woman died before her husband, she is considered so lucky that her face and especially her forehead was smeared red. Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 143.
294. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 356 ; *Storia*, III, p. 71 ; Tavernier, Chapter VII, p. 168 ; Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 249 ; Della Valle (1664 edition), p. 435.
295. Cot is usually made of bamboo though it should be of *udumbara* wood (*Ficus Glemarata*). Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 432.
296. *Storia*, III, p. 155.
297. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 294 ; *Storia*, III, p. 72.
298. *Storia*, III, p. 156 ; Petermundy, II, p. 220 ; Della Valle, II (ed. Grey), p. 271 ; Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 249.
299. Ovington, p. 342. Also see Petermundy, II, p. 220.
300. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 434.
301. Della Valle, II (ed. Grey), p. 271.
302. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 439.
303. Herbert's *Travels*, p. 451. Nieuhoff's *Voyages*, p. 229 ; *Ramayana* (Growse), p. 257 ; Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 150.
304. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 393. For details also see Grose, *op. cit.*, I, p. 228.
305. *Storia*, III, p. 73.
306. *Ibid.*, p. 154.
307. For details refer to Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 447.
308. *Storia*, III, p. 73. On hearing the death of Dasrath, Rama and all his people took a bath in the stream. *Ramayana* (Growse), p. 293. All the relatives of the dead down to the seventh or tenth generation bathe in the nearest stream and purify themselves by it. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 447.
309. *Ibid.*, p. 448. Other prescriptions are : rinse the mouth, touch water, fire, cow-dung, etc., inhale the smoke of a certain species of wood, tread upon stone and then enter. E.R.E., IV, p. 478. These are supposed to act as a barrier to the inauspicious spirit of the dead and symbolize the severance of relations with the deceased. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 448.
310. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 355.



311. *Early Travels*, p. 217. She would abstain from putting on ornaments and luxurious garments until her death. *Ibid.*
312. *Storia*, III, p. 72. Recently about 40,000 people offered themselves for hair-cut on the death of their ruler, the Raja of Gwalior.
313. *Ain*, III, (Sarkar), p. 357 ; Herbert's *Travels*, p. 45 ; Nieuhoff, *Voyages*, p. 228, mentions 13 days.
314. Pandey , *op. cit.*, p. 450.
315. *Ibid.*
316. Nieuhoff's *Voyages*, p. 228 ; *Asiatick Researches*, Vol. V, p. 12.
317. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 356 ; Ovington, p. 243 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 294. On the death of Dasrath, Bharat gave Brahmans abundant gifts, cows, horses, elephants, all kinds of carriages, thrones, jewels, robes, grains, lands, money, houses, for his purification. *Ramayana* (Growse), p. 257.
318. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 356. According to Herbert (p. 45), during these ten days they would "neither use wife, nor laugh nor take opium or betel, put on no clean clothes nor oyle one's head." Also refer to Conti's *Travel in India in the 15th Century*, p. 25 and *Asiatick Researches*, Vol. V, p. 12. The women passed this period in singing mournful songs, crying, scattering and pulling their hair, then singing again etc. and off and on beating their breasts in the company of female friends, relatives and neighbours. Petermundy, II, p. 220; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 294. Rama fasted the whole day on hearing the death of his father. *Ramayana* (Growse), p. 293.
319. Burhan's *Tuzuk-i-Walajahi*, Pt. I (English Translation), p. 77 ; Herbert's *Travels* p. 45.
320. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 294.
321. On the fourth day after the death of a Brahman, the fifth after the death of a Kshatriya, the ninth and tenth after that of a Vaisya and Sudra respectively. *Ain*, III, (Sarkar), p. 356.
322. "In order to cool the soul of the deceased," according to Manucci. *Storia*, III, p. 154.

323. *Storia*, III, p. 154 ; Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 294 ; Della Valle (1664 ed.), p. 435 ; Grose, *op. cit.*, I, p. 227.
324. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 356. Herbert's *Travels*, p. 45. Alberuni. II, p. 169. Also refer to *Islamic Culture*, July 1934, p. 430.
325. *Storia*, III, p. 154 ; Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 249 ; Della Valle (1674), p. 435 ; Alberuni, II, p. 169.
326. *Ramayana* (Growse), p. 257 ; Grose, *op. cit.*, I, p. 227.
327. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 357. It is supposed to nourish the soul of the deceased who is regarded as still living in a sense and the efforts of the survivors are to provide him with food and guide his footsteps to the paramount abode of the dead. Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 464-75 ; E.R.E. p. 810.
328. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 357. For details of this ceremony refer to E.R.E., Vol. IV, p. 479. According to Hindu belief when the body dies, the soul takes a subtle form which they call *Preta*. This is properly the spirit of the deceased which meets its *Pitaras* after the obsequial rites are performed. E.R.E., II, p. 810.
329. *Storia*, III, p. 73. Tukaram also refers to this ceremony. *J.R.A.S.*, Bombay Branch, Vol. III, p. 19.
330. To feed the ancestors to propitiate or keep them away or to summon their aid are the purposes served by the *Shraddhas* described in ritual and law. E.R.E., Vol. IV, p. 479.
331. *Tuzuk* (R & B), I, pp. 246-47.
332. Abul Fazl adds the following days. Also on the first day of the first quarter of the new moon, on the 6th lunar day of the month of *Kuar*, and bestowing charity in a place of worship in the name of the deceased. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 307. Also see Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, pp. 171-81.
333. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), pp. 307-8 ; *J.R.A.S.*, Bombay Branch, Vol. III, p. 19.
334. "I shall go and procure some vegetables. We shall cook them." *J.R.A.S.*, Bombay Branch, Vol. III, p. 19.
335. Melville Kennedy, *The Chaitanya Movement*, p. 18.
336. For details refer to Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. IV, pp. 501-2 ; Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, pp. 80-82 ; Herklots' *Islam in India*, pp. 90.

337. E.R.E., IV, p. 501.
338. *M.A.* (Urdu), p. 381.
339. Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 90.
340. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 80.
341. Also see *Storia* II, p. 342 ; IV, p. 436. If a great man died, the fact was communicated to the emperor in the phrase "Such or such a one hath made himself a sacrifice at Your Majesty's feet." *A Voyage to East Indies*, reprint of 1777, p. 382.
342. *Maasir-ul-Umra*, I, trans., Beveridge, p. 123.
343. *Ibid.*
344. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 282. Della Valle (1664 edition), p. 432.
345. Irvine, *The Later Mughals*, Vol. I (ed. Sarkar), p. 7.
346. Ovington, p. 246.
347. The Prophet gave the following reason for it : "If he was a good man, the sooner he is buried, the more quickly he will reach heaven ; if a bad man, he should be speedily buried so that his unhappy lot may not fall upon others in his house." Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 81.
348. It consists of three pieces of cotton for men, five for women. Only white colour is admissible in India. E.R.E., IV, p. 501 ; Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 81.
349. Sarkar, *Anecdotes of Aurangzib*, p. 124.
350. Della Valle (1664 edition), p. 431 ; *Storia*, III, p. 153 ; E.R.E., IV, p. 501.
351. *Storia*, II, p. 126 ; IV, p. 431. Smith's *Akbar*, p. 327. While removing the corpse, the head was taken out first in order to baffle the ghost and to prevent its finding its way back. See W. Crookes' *Popular Religion and Folklore*, second edition, ii, p. 56 Also see Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 385.
352. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 44.
353. *Maasir*, I, p. 148 ; Gulbadan Begam, *Humayunnama*, trans. Beveridge, p. 62.
354. *Maasir*, I, p. 613.
355. *Ibid.* Azam Shah carried the dead body of Aurangzeb on his shoulders up to the main entrance gate. W. Irvine, *The Later Mughals*, (ed. Sarkar), Vol. I, p. 7.
356. Ovington, p. 245 ; *Storia*, III, p. 153.
357. *Storia*, III, p. 153.

358. "A turban bound with gold is laid upon the outside as a token that inside is a body." *Storia*, III, p. 153.
359. *Storia*, III, p. 153.
360. *Ibid.*
361. E.R.E., IV, p. 501.
362. *Storia*, III, p. 153.
363. E.R.E., IV, p. 510 ; *Qanoon-i-Islam*, pp. 96-97.
364. *Ibid.* ; *Sir John Marshall in India*, p. 404.
365. Della Valle (ed. 1664), p. 401 ; *India in the 17th Century*, p. 382. "The grave of a woman should be the height of a man's chest, if for a man to the height of the waist." *Qanoon-i-Islam*, p. 98 ; Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 45. On Kam Baksh's death, Qazi and Muhammad Ghauz, the chief *Mufti*, with other religious men, were entrusted with the grave. Irvine, *The Later Mughals*, Vol. I (ed. Sarkar), pp. 64-65.
366. *Sir John Marshall in India*, p. 404.
367. "When the angles come and ask the dead his catechism, he must reply that God is Allah, His Prophet, Muhammad, his religion, Islam, his Bible, the Quran, and his *qibla* the *Kaba*." Also see Irvine, *The Later Mughals* (ed. Sarkar), Vol. I, pp. 64-65.
368. E.R.E., IV, p. 502.
369. *Storia*, III, p. 153.
370. *Ibid.*, Also see Gulbadan Begam, *Humayunnama*, trans., p. 62 ; *Qanoon-i-Islam*, p. 105.
371. *Maasir*, I pp. 255, 563, 723.
372. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 282.
373. *Tuzuk* (R & B), I, p. 85.
374. *Maasir*, I, p. 295.
375. *Ibid.*, p. 246.
376. Daughter of Dara Shukoh. Sarkar, *Studies in Aurangzib's Reign*, p. 81. Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah stopped drum-beating for three days to show respect to the memory of his kinsman. *Hadiqatul-Alam*, II, p. 123, quoted in *Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah*, I, p. 140.
377. Latif, *Agra, Historical and Descriptive*, p. 40.
378. On the death of Jiji Anaga, Akbar, besides her sons and in fact the whole tribe, got their heads and moustaches

- shaved. *Maasir*, I, p. 327. Sometimes a widow would also get her head shaved. *Maasir*, I, p. 812.
379. *Storia*, III, p. 253.
  380. *Qanoon-i-Islam*, p. 107.
  381. *Ibid.*
  382. Badaoni, I, p. 248.
  383. *Storia*, III, p. 153. Akbar attended the *chihlum* of his story-teller Darbar Khan. Hodivala's *Studies in Indo-Muslim History*, p. 580. A sum of Rs. 2 lakhs was spent in furnishing the corpse, distributing alms and despatching coffin to Delhi on the death of Jahanzeb Banu Begam. Sarkar, *Studies in Aurangzib's Reign*, p. 81.
  384. Della Valle (1664 edition), p. 432 ; Ovington, p. 245 ; *India in the 17th Century*, p. 282.
  385. *Tuzuk* (R & B), I, p. 247.
  386. *Storia*, III, p. 153 ; Ovington, p. 245.
  387. *Tuzuk-i-Walajahi* by Burhan Ibn Hasan, English translation by S. Muhammad Husayn Nainar.
  388. Ovington, p. 245.
  389. Petermundy, II, p. 229.
  390. *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, R & B., I, pp. 148, 247, 249.
  391. Della Valle (1664 edition), p. 432.
  392. *Ibid.*
  393. *Ibid.*
  394. Sarkar, *Aurangzib*, III, p. 101.
  395. E. & D., III, p. 380.
  396. Sarkar, *Aurangzib*, III, p. 101.
  397. *Ibid.*

## CHAPTER 8

# Social Etiquettes and Manners

### General

Social calls have never been in vogue in Indian society.<sup>1</sup> Our individualistic outlook, which is primarily due to the prevalence of the caste system, is responsible for it. Our women's inability, on account of restrictions imposed by society, to attend to male guests or to talk familiarly with them, might have been another factor. Men met often, however, in the past and they do daily even to this day, on the *chaupals*<sup>2</sup> in the villages but women had little opportunity or even leisure to pay a visit to their female friends or relatives. Men in urban areas met only briefly to talk business and women found still fewer opportunities to visit one another owing not a little to the observance of the *purdah* during Muslim rule in India. However, various occasions like births, marriages, funerals, etc. or even sickness provided an opportunity to both sexes to meet their friends and relatives.

### Formalities for receiving a guest

Visitors were received with many formalities during Mughal days. Whenever a visitor arrived, it was customary for the master of the house to receive him at the gate.<sup>3</sup> The shoes were usually put off at the entrance.<sup>4</sup> If he happened to be an elderly or spiritual person, it was usual in a Hindu home to wash his feet with water mixed with sandal-paste, flowers, and rice.<sup>5</sup> If there was no previous intimation, the house-keeper would rise from his seat to welcome him.<sup>6</sup> He was then taken to the drawing-room which, in the case of a rich family, was spread over with beautiful and costly carpets having cushions of velvet to "bolster their backs and sides."<sup>7</sup> A mat and a cot served the same purpose in an ordinary home.<sup>8</sup>

Chairs were thought to be uncomfortable and were rarely used. Even the Governor of Surat had no chairs and one was brought specially for Roe on his insistence.<sup>10</sup> A person who let his legs or feet be seen while sitting was considered to be devoid of manners.<sup>11</sup> Nobles and governors would usually receive their visitors in their daily *darbar* held in the *Diwan Khana* richly decorated with handsome rugs and costly tapestry.<sup>12</sup> The visitors took their seats on his either side according to their rank or dignity after the usual *salams*.<sup>13</sup> Strangers were allowed to visit by permission and left after their business was over.<sup>14</sup> Intimate friends might stay on till the noble retired to the *zenana*.<sup>15</sup>

### Visit to king difficult and expensive

A visit to the king was both difficult and expensive. High and influential nobles had to be approached and even bribed before the royal permission could be had.<sup>16</sup> Sir William Norris who came to India as the British king's ambassador to the great Mughal, rightly formed the opinion that many "generous and great men" besides the Mughal would have to be "gratified," and as the presents sent from London were much too few, so he asked his men to make local purchases.<sup>17</sup> The ceremonies to be observed at the court required a good deal of training. Sir Thomas Roe,<sup>18</sup> Bernier<sup>19</sup> and Manucci<sup>20</sup> have referred to the formalities an ambassador had to observe while paying a visit to the Indian sovereign.

### Reception of an ambassador and king

A noble was specially despatched to receive the ambassador at an earlier stage of his journey and present him with *khilat* on behalf of the king. The ambassador was expected to present his credentials to the king clad in this robe of honour. Persian ambassadors were shown special courtesy while others were allotted an inconspicuous place in the *darbar*.<sup>21</sup> A few ambassadors had the good fortune to be received by the king in the private audience.

A foreign ruler was received with due ceremonies. Raja Bhagwan Das was sent by Akbar to receive Mirza Sulaiman, the ruler of Badakshan at the Nilab River.<sup>22</sup> M. Jani Beg, the

ruler of Sind, was received by Abul Fazl at the gate.<sup>23</sup> Khusrau Sultan, son of Nadhr Khan, ruler of Balkh and Badakshan, was received by Ali Mardhan Khan at the edge of his carpet.<sup>24</sup>

### Offering of *nazrana* obligatory

When paying a visit to a great man—a king, a prince, a governor or even a noble—it was the usual custom to offer him some presents.<sup>25</sup> It was considered highly discourteous for an inferior dignitary to call upon a superior dignitary empty-handed.<sup>26</sup> The presents meant for the nobles were of not much value but those offered to the king included rare things and cost heavily.<sup>27</sup> Tavernier's presents to Aurangzeb, for instance, included "a battle-mace of rock crystal, all the sides of which were covered with rubies and emeralds inlaid in gold in the crystal."<sup>28</sup> These presents were looked upon as *nazrana* or a homage to the lord<sup>29</sup> who would usually select some articles and return the rest.<sup>30</sup> It was considered unmanly to refuse a present without some specific reasons.<sup>31</sup> Mandelslo quotes it as an eye-opener for the Europeans who thought Indians to be uncivilized. The traveller adds that there is "more civility to be found among the Indians than there is among those who pretend to the sole possession of it but seldom accompanying it with the sincerity which even attends it in the Indies."<sup>32</sup> Thevenot rightly ridicules the ignorance of the envoys of the French East India Company who refused to accept Rs. 30 offered to them as a present by the *banias*. Unaware of the Indian custom, the envoys thought they were being treated as beggars and got annoyed. Thevenot, well aware of the Indian custom, explains in detail the proper and civilized manner of responding to such a present. Either the envoys, he writes, should have accepted the money and made some presents in return, or given the money back after receiving it or should have just touched and then returned it.<sup>33</sup>

### King's visits

Mughal kings rarely paid visits to their nobles. Even these rare visits were usually confined to those families which were in matrimonial alliance with the royal house.<sup>34</sup> It was the highest honour which a noble could ever dream of. Huge presents had



to be offered to the king as *nazrana*.<sup>35</sup> Sometimes, however, the king would call on an ailing noble of a very high rank to inquire about his health.<sup>36</sup> Hawkins describes in detail the ceremonies to be observed by a nobleman while paying his respects to the king after two or three years' continuous absence from the capital.<sup>37</sup>

### Politeness of Indians

The Indian manner of conversation has elicited much praise from the travellers<sup>38</sup> who describe them as "past masters of good manners."<sup>39</sup> Polite and modest in their conversation, they were at the same time very civil and reserved.<sup>40</sup> Even friends gossiped in a dignified manner.<sup>41</sup> While talking to their elders or superiors, they were very careful and would not let their heads be uncovered,<sup>42</sup> as this was considered to be a sign of disrespect. They applauded the elders' performances and dared not contradict or even question the authenticity of their statements.<sup>43</sup> They would not usually take their seats in their presence, as it was taken to be a gesture of disrespect to the elderly fellow. Religious teachers, Brahmans<sup>44</sup> and the Qazis were specially cared for and respected. Akbar stood up to receive the saint, Dadu.<sup>45</sup> Aurangzeb was annoyed to learn that Ibrahim Khan, the Governor of Bengal, sat on a couch in the *darbar* while the Qazis and other jurists took their seats on the floor.<sup>46</sup> Babar, who calls the Pathans rustic and tactless, goes on to quote an instance: "Biban waited on me, this person sat although Dilawar Khan, his superior in rank, the son of Alam Khan who are of royal birth, did not."<sup>47</sup>

### Respect shown to elders

Everyone greeted his elders with the utmost respect. Akbar had just gone to bed when his aunt Nigar Khanum arrived. Half asleep, he at once got up and saluted her.<sup>48</sup> Careri relates how sixty-five years old Shah Alam alighted from his horse at the sight of his father Aurangzeb and paid his respects.<sup>49</sup> On receiving a letter from Jahangir, Khurram even when in rebellion, kissed and lifted it to his eyes and head and while reading he bowed down at every word.<sup>50</sup> At an interview the prince, according to etiquette, would walk round the emperor twice

and present *nazar* and *nisar* to him.<sup>51</sup> Raja Ram Singh, as a token of respect, touched the feet of the older Shaista Khan who embraced the Raja and kissed his head. The sons of the Nawab in turn touched the feet of the Raja and accompanied him for a considerable distance.<sup>52</sup> How a Mughal king bade good-bye to his son going out on an expedition or welcomed him on his victorious return is very well illustrated in various paintings of the period.<sup>53</sup> While the king embraces his son out of paternal affection, the latter bows his head with all respect.<sup>54</sup>

### Court etiquette

Elaborate rules had been laid down regarding appearance, salutation and conduct in the darbar.<sup>55</sup> Every noble at the court was obliged to attend the darbar twice daily.<sup>56</sup> It was strictly forbidden to come in a *palki* within the enclosure of the royal palace.<sup>56\*</sup> Except with the permission of the king, no one could come armed to the darbar.<sup>56+</sup> Even the offering of betel-leaves by the nobles to each other was not permitted.<sup>56†</sup> As a general rule, barring a few specially privileged notables<sup>57</sup> or princes of the royal blood,<sup>58</sup> none could dare to sit in the court. The highest dignitaries of the state, ambassadors from foreign lands and even dethroned princes seeking military or financial aid, were no exception to it. When Ambassador Sir Thomas Roe demanded a chair, he was frankly told that "none has ever sat in this place."<sup>59</sup> The princes stood within a few yards of the royal throne. Next came the most favoured grades who stood within an enclosure of silver railings. The red-painted wooden railing enclosure was meant for the lesser *mansabdars*.<sup>60</sup> No one was permitted to leave the darbar till the king had retired. The king was addressed as *Hazrat Salamat*, *Qiblah-Din-wa-Dunia*, *Qiblah-i-Din-i-Jahan*, *Alam Panah*, etc.<sup>61</sup> Aurangzeb was called *Pir-i-Dastgir*.<sup>62</sup> The king would reply in a dignified and majestic tone.<sup>63</sup> Linschoten's observation that the king would talk to an ambassador even though he could understand his language only through an interpreter is based on hearsay<sup>64</sup>. Serious notice was taken of any misconduct. Lashkar Khan, the Mir Bakshi, once appeared in the court drunk and misbehaved. He was ordered to be taken round the city tied to a horse's tail and later sent to jail.<sup>65</sup>

### **Behaviour in assembly**

The decorum maintained in an assembly was exemplary.<sup>66</sup> They made no gestures and were never loud in their discussions.<sup>67</sup> There was a certain gravity in their mode of speaking.<sup>68</sup> If there happened to be something confidential to be conveyed to the other person, they would hold a handkerchief or scarf in front of their mouths to avoid the other's breath.<sup>69</sup> None of them would move from his seat<sup>70</sup> or do anything which might be against the recognized etiquette.<sup>71</sup> Ovington, after admiring the Hindu merchants for their innocence, humility and patience, writes: "The Orientals are generally much more tender and . . . more prompt and easy in their deportment than those bred in Europe."<sup>72</sup>

Orme's praise of the dignified manner in which the courtiers of the Nawab behaved in face of the indecent jokes cut by the Europeans regarding their manners, etc. may well serve as an example.<sup>73</sup> They would, no doubt, make a loud noise when quarrelling but rarely did they come to blows.<sup>74</sup>

### **Offer of a betel significant**

Visitors were usually entertained with betels<sup>75</sup> which were brought in wooden trays.<sup>76</sup> The offering of a betel also indicated that the visitors might now leave.<sup>77</sup> When offered by the emperor, it meant great honour and had to be eaten in his presence.<sup>78</sup> The greatest honour, however, consisted in partaking of the half-chewed betel of the emperor. He would sometimes bestow a *jagir*, *khilat*, or other gifts on the visitor.<sup>79</sup>

### **Greetings and salutations**

Hindus and Muslims differ in their mode of greeting friends, relatives or superiors. The handshake,<sup>80</sup> the present mode of salutation, common among the educated classes of both communities, was never in vogue during the ancient<sup>81</sup> and medieval periods. Its general adoption is primarily due to India's contact with the West during the last two centuries.

Manucci describes five kinds of salutation prevalent among the Hindus in Mughal days.<sup>82</sup> "Ram, Ram,"<sup>83</sup> the most popular form of greeting among equals, has been referred to by many travellers.<sup>84</sup> Quite frequently the palms of the hands would be

folded<sup>85</sup> and raised up to the stomach as a mark of respect for an elderly friend. An embrace might also follow specially when they had not met for a long time.<sup>86</sup> A person of higher status, a governor, a minister or a general, was greeted by raising the folded hands above the head.<sup>87</sup> Greater respect was paid to an elder, father, mother or a spiritual teacher. The younger would greet an elder by bowing down, touching his or her feet and raising the hand to his head.<sup>88</sup> He would even prostrate himself before his teacher.<sup>89</sup> The king was also greeted in the same manner by all classes<sup>90</sup> except the Brahmans who would only raise their folded hands.<sup>91</sup> Brahmans, as a class, were held in high esteem and none would dare to pass by them without bowing his head in reverence.<sup>92</sup> The superior would greet the inferior by displaying the palm of the right hand raised high.<sup>93</sup> Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh religion, is said to have advised his followers to return the salutation with the words "Sat Kartar" (the True Creator).<sup>94</sup>

### Muhammadian salutations

*Salam*<sup>95</sup> was the usual salutation among all classes of Muhammadans who are religiously bound to greet each other with the words *al-Salam alekum*,<sup>96</sup> the other responding *Walekum-al-Salam*.<sup>97</sup> Strangely, the travellers fail to refer to the use of the latter form of greeting by Indian Muslims during Mughal days. Nizamuddin, however, refers to its use while relating the incident of Shaikh Ali who had adopted the practices of Mahdism. The latter did not observe *taslim* while paying a visit to King Salim Khan. Shaikh Ali made the salutation permitted by the *shara* to which Salim Khan indignantly replied *alek-al-Salam*.<sup>98</sup> Aurangzeb, however, made it obligatory in April 1670.<sup>99</sup> Friends would greet each other by raising the right hand to the forehead,<sup>100</sup> and would even embrace<sup>101</sup> or grasp each other's hands in token of love.<sup>102</sup> A little inclination of the head or body also served the same purpose.<sup>103</sup> When greeting a superior, the performance of both the above-mentioned modes together was necessary.<sup>104</sup>

High personages were greeted by raising the right hand to the forehead and bending the body forward.<sup>105</sup> It was customary for a person of lower status to get down from his horse at the sight of a superior one and let him pass first.<sup>106</sup> The

latter acknowledged the greeting of the inferior person with a inclination of the head.<sup>107</sup> The nobles would dismount at the sight of the royal ladies and greet them with a bow. Having received a betel-leaf, they again bowed and withdrew.<sup>108</sup>

### Kornish and Taslim

*Kornish* and *taslim* have been mentioned by Abul Fazl as the recognized modes of salutation to the king.<sup>109</sup> *Kornish* consisted in placing the palm of the right hand on the forehead and bending down the head.<sup>111</sup> While offering *taslim*,<sup>112</sup> the person placed the back of his right hand on the ground, raising it slowly till he stood erect when he put the palm of his hand on the top of his head.<sup>113</sup> After raising the hand from the ground, it was usual, as Ovington remarks, to place it on the breast before taking it to the forehead.<sup>114</sup> Della Valle corroborates it.<sup>115</sup> It was the usual custom, as Babar relates, to kneel thrice before the king<sup>116</sup> upon taking leave, or upon presentation, or upon receiving a *mansab*, a *jagir*, or a dress of honour or an elephant or a horse but only once on all other occasions.<sup>117</sup> Akbar issued orders that *taslim* should be repeated thrice.<sup>118</sup> He, however, exempted Sh. Gadai Kaml and Mirza Sulaiman,<sup>119</sup> ruler of Badakshan, from this customary salutation. These modes of salutations were strictly reserved for the king during Akbar's reign.<sup>120</sup> *Taslim*, however, became a common mode of greeting among nobles during the succeeding reigns but Aurangzeb forbade it in April 1670 and introduced *Salam-alekum* instead.<sup>121</sup>

### Sijdah

Akbar, the founder of *Din-i-Ilahi*, introduced another salutation called *Sijdah*,<sup>122</sup> perhaps at the insistence of his friends, admirers and disciples.<sup>123</sup> As it consisted in bowing down to the forehead to the earth, it was looked upon as man-worship by the orthodox.<sup>124</sup> Akbar thought it wise to forbid this practice in *Darbar-i-Am* but allowed it in private assemblies.<sup>125</sup> This custom appears to have been continued during the reign of Jahangir when the subjects prostrated themselves before the king in grateful return for any royal favours conferred on them and also on receipt of royal mandates.<sup>126</sup>

### Kissing the ground

It was, however, found to be objectionable and Shahjahan introduced instead *Zaminbos* or the practice of kissing the ground which was also abandoned after some time and the usual mode of salutation by bowing and touching the head was restored with the addition that it was to be observed not less than four times.<sup>127</sup> Bernier describes how this custom was observed by all the ambassadors when attending the Mughal<sup>128</sup> court but the Persian ambassador would not do so in spite of all the machinations of Shahjahan.<sup>129</sup> Aurangzeb completely did away with these so-called pretensions to idolatory and ordered that the usual mode of salutation, *al-Salam-alekum*, be observed.<sup>130</sup>

Defection, if any, was immediately detected and the offender was suitably punished. Aurangzeb was highly displeased when Zulfiqar Khan's knees touched the royal throne while he was bowing to kiss the Emperor's toe. The Khan was ordered to attend the court for three days with spectacles on as "he had forgotten the court etiquette due to long absence."<sup>131</sup>

The custom of performing *taslim* thrice continued without any change during the reigns of the later Mughals as is clearly borne out by the despatches of Johan Ketelaar, the Dutch ambassador to Shah Alam.<sup>132</sup> Whenever the ambassador received a present from the king, he would "turn his brow towards his tent in the Moorish fashion and perform three salams."<sup>133</sup>

It is interesting to note here that *Jharoka darshan* or the practice of the king appearing before the public, which began during Akbar's time, became so popular that many Hindus would start day's work only after having a look at the auspicious face of the king. It was continued during the reign of Jahangir and Shahjahan but was given up by the orthodox Aurangzeb.<sup>133\*</sup>

### NOTES

1. See *The Mirza-Nama* of Mirza Kamran, English translation by M. Hidayat Husain, *J.R.A.S.B.*, New Series, Vol. IX, 1913, p. 5.
2. Macauliffe, I, p. 65 ; Y.H. Khan, *Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah*, I, pp. 9, 144 ; *Maasir*, I, p. 723.

3. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 280 ; Fryer (old ed.), p. 95.
4. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 280 ; *Storia*, II, p. 39 ; Tavernier, II, p. 233.
5. *Ain*, III, p. 381. *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 172. *Storia*, III, p. 38. Jhanda, a carpenter of Bisar (in old Bushahir State) received Guru Nanak in his house, washed his feet and drank the water used for this purpose. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, I, p. 93.
6. *Maasir*, I, p. 127 ; M. Jani Beg, the ruler of Sind, was greatly displeased when Abul Fazl did not rise to receive him (*Maasir*, I, p. 127). Khan Jahan Lodhi used to rise in honour of Fazl, Dewan of Deccan, but would not do so for Asad who used to say : "He rises for a Moghul and does not rise for me who am a Saiyid." (*Maasir*, I, p. 270).
7. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 280.
8. Mandelslo, p. 27 ; *Jahangir's India*, p. 61.
9. Tavernier, II, p. 233.
10. *Roe's Embassy*, p. 65.
11. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 280. Tavernier saw Mir Jumla sitting on a carpet and wrote that "People sit in this country as in Turkey and as our tailors do." Tavernier, II, p. 233. Various paintings of the period depicting *darbar* scenes corroborate the above version. Even see "A drinking party" (Plate 88, Vol. III, Chester Beatty). Akbar is also seen sitting in the same posture with his legs underneath in the presence of Baba Bilal (Plate 89, Vol. I, Chester Beatty).
12. *Jahangir's India*, pp. 67-68 ; De Laet, p. 91 ; Mandelslo, p. 64 ; Orme's *Fragments*, p. 426.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Mandelslo, p. 64.
15. *Jahangir's India*, p. 68.
16. Tavernier had to offer presents worth about £. 1,739 to the grandees including Shaista Khan, Jaffar Khan, chief treasurer, the stewards, the captains of the palace gates etc. Tavernier, I, pp. 106, 114, 115 (ed. 1925). Also referred to Sir William Norris at Masulipatam, *J.I.H.*, Vol. V, 1927, p. 59. The consul at Surat told Sir William Norris

- that not to speak of the nobles and others even the king himself "values nothing so much as a good sum of money paid into his treasury." *J.I.H.*, Vol. VI, 1927, p. 59.
17. Sir William Norris at Masulipatam, *J.I.H.*, Vol. V, p. 211, 1926, and Vol. VI, 1927, p. 59.
  18. Roe was refused a chair in the court on the plea that "no man ever sat in that place" but he was allowed, as a privilege, to recline against a pillar. *Roe's Embassy*, pp. 92-93.
  19. Bernier (ed. Constable), pp. 117-18.
  20. *Storia*, I, pp. 87-89.
  21. Bernier, pp. 119-20 ; *I.N.*, I, 336-37 ; *M.A.* (Persian), 37 ; *Roe's Embassy*, pp. 295-297. Also see Sir Norris at Masulipatam, *J.I.H.*, Vol. VI, p. 65.
  22. *T.A.*, II, (trans), p. 475.
  23. *Maasir*, I, p. 127.
  24. *Ibid.*, p. 822.
  25. Hamilton, I, p. 119 ; Fryer (old), pp. 80-81 ; Tavernier, I, p. 115 ; Thevenot, p. 100 ; Mandelslo, p. 33 ; *Storia*, II, pp. 344, 52. Manucci writes that this habit was borrowed by the Indian kings from Persia. *Storia*, II, p. 52. *T.A.*, II, pp. 263, 302, 325, 346-47. Also see extract from the "Letter Book of Thomas Pitt" (1699-1709), *J.I.H.*, Vol. XX, pt. III, p. 315.
  26. Hamilton, I, p. 119. Geleynssen rightly observes : "Here (India) as in most parts of the world, the great men are eager for presents, firstly for the respect and recognition they imply (for they stand very strictly on their reputation) and secondly, for the gratification because most of them are exceedingly covetous and avaricious. Geleynssen's Report, trans., *J.I.H.* Vol. III, Pts. III and IV, p. 80. Also Sarkar, *Studies in Aurangzib's Reign*, pp. 110-11.
  27. Tavernier, I, p. 114.
  28. *Ibid.* For Sir William Norris' presents to Nawab of Masulipatam refer to *J.I.H.*, Vol. V, p. 219.
  29. Thevenot, *op. cit.*, p. 100.
  30. Despatches of Dutch Ambassador Ketelaar, *J.P.H.S.*, Vol. I, p. 15.
  31. *Ibid.* Also see extract from the "Letter Book of Thomas



- Pitt" (1699-1709) by Dr. A.G. Pawar in *J.I.H.*, Vol. XX, Pt. 3, December 1941, p. 319.
32. Mandelslo, p. 33.
  33. Thevenot, Chap. xxxviii *op. cit.*, p. 100. Manrique mentions how Tulsidas, a trader of Multan, received his gift. After kissing it a number of times, he touched it with his head thrice. Manrique, II, p. 224.
  34. Shahjahan honoured Afzal Khan with a visit. *Maasir*: I, p. 152.
  35. *Ibid.*
  36. Akbar visited Abul Fath, the Sadr, during the latter's illness. *Maasir*, I, p. 108. Aurangzeb called on Jaffar Khan to enquire about his health. *Maasir*, I, p. 723. Also see Y.H. Khan, *Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah*, I, p. 9. Khan Khanan went to the house of Maulana Pir Muhammad, his Vakil-i-Mutlaq, when the latter was ill. *T.A.*, II, p. 230.
  37. *Hawkins' Voyages* (Hak. Soc.), p. 441. Also see Bernier, p. 266.
  38. *Jahangir's India*, p. 67 ; Mandelslo, p. 64 ; Orme's *Fragments*, pp. 427-29 ; De Laet, p. 91 ; Ovington, pp. 232, 313.
  39. De Laet, p. 91.
  40. Mandelslo, p. 64 ; De Laet, p. 91 ; Ovington, p. 231. Also see *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 8 ; *Mirza-Nama*, English Translation, M. Hidayat Husain, A.S.B. New Series, Vol. IX, 1913, p. 4.
  41. Orme's *Fragments*, p. 426.
  42. *Storia*, III, p. 39. *Sannaysis* and Brahmins were an exception.
  43. Orme's *Fragments*, p. 426.
  44. Nieuhoff's *Voyages*, p. 222 ; Orme's *Fragments*, pp. 432, 434.
  45. W.G. Orr, *A Sixteenth Century Indian Mystic : Dadu and His Followers*. p. 35. Also see *T.A.*, II, p. 468.
  46. Sarkar, *Anecdotes of Aurangzib*, p. 118.
  47. *B.N.* (Beveridge), p. 466.
  48. *A.N.*, I, p. 90 ; Tr., I, p. 231. Also see Badaoni, II, p. 64 ; Tr. II, p. 63.
  49. Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 219.

50. Padshah Buranjis, *Islamic Culture*, January 1934, p. 71.
51. Sarkar, *Studies in Aurangzib's Reign*, p. 74.
52. *Islamic Culture*, April 1934, p. 91.
53. Plate II, Indian Drawings, 'Shahjahan leaving for an expedition to Balkh in 1647 A.D.' and 'Jahangir receiving Prince Khurram on his return from Deccan' (Plate XXIII, Catalogue of Indian Collections, Part VI, Mughal Paintings).
54. *Ibid.* For a painting depicting Jahangir welcoming Shahjahan, refer to Percy Brown, *Indian Paintings Under the Mughals*, Plate LVIII, p. 150.
55. *Ain*, I, (1939) pp. 168-69.
56. Tavernier, I, pp. 114-15 ; Sir William Norris at Masulipatam, J.I.H., Vol. VI, 1927, p. 59.
- 56\*. Ali, M. Athar, *Mughal Nobility Under Aurangzeb*, p. 138.
- 56†. *Ibid.*
- 56\*. *Ibid.*
57. Abdur Rahim was allowed to sit in the darbar by Jahangir and a little later by Shahjahan. For details see *Tuzuk*, p. 416 ; *Badshahnama*, I, i, p. 194 quoted in *Thrones, Chairs and Seats used by the Indian Mughals* by Abdul Aziz, p. 182 ; Ovington, p. 194.
58. This honour was conferred on Prince Khurram after his return from a victorious campaign in the Deccan. *Tuzuk*, p. 195 ; R. & B., I, 395. Dara Shukoh was allowed to sit in the darbar on the Nauroz festival in 1060 A.H. *Badshahnama*, III, p. 108a, vide Abdul Aziz, *op. cit.*, p. 183.
59. *Roe's Embassy*, Foster, 1926, p. 71.
60. *Early Travels*, p. 115 ; Manrique (Hak. Soc.), pp. 192-98 ; Petermundy, II (Hak. Soc.), p. 200 ; *Roe's Embassy*, p. 93 ; *A.N.*, I, p. 358 ; *M.A.*, pp. 88, 128.
61. *Storia*, II, p. 346.
62. *Ibid.*
63. *Storia*, II, p. 401.
64. Linschoten, II, p. 67. Monserrate (p. 204) praises the courtesy and kindness shown by Akbar towards foreigners and ambassadors.
65. *A.N.*, II, p. 364 ; *Tr.*, II, p. 529.
66. Referring to the assemblies usually held in the *Diwan Khana* of a noble, Pelsaert writes : "It is more like a

- school of wise and virtuous philosophers than a gathering of false infidels." Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 67. Also refer to Orme's *Fragments*, 431.
67. Orme's *Fragments*, p. 426. Mandelslo, p. 64 ; Ovington, pp. 275, 313. This was considered one of the main tenets of Mirza. *Mirza-Nama*, English trans. in *J.A.S.B.*, N.S. Vol. IX, p. 4.
  68. Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 67. See Plate 79 (b), Vol. III, of the Library of Chester Beatty for "A saint conversing with a young noble."
  69. Linschoten, II, p. 56 ; *Jahangir's India*, p. 67 ; Mandelslo, p. 64.
  70. *Jahangir's India*, p. 67.
  71. Orme's *Fragments*, pp. 428, 432 ; Ovington, p. 275.
  72. Ovington, p. 275. "Banias are most innocent and obsequious, humble...." *Ibid*.
  73. Orme's *Fragments*, p. 427.
  74. Thevenot, Chap. xxxviii, p. 72 ; Ovington, p. 275.
  75. Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 205 ; Mandelslo, p. 33 ; *Storia*, I, p. 63 ; Pieter Van Den Brocke at Surat (1620-29), translation in *J.I.H.*, Vol. XI. It is offered as a glass of wine among Europeans. Grose, *op. cit.*, I, p. 237. Mir Jumla entertained Tavernier and his party with betels. Tavernier, I, p. 239 ; Y.H. Khan, *Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah*, I, p. 144 ; *History of East Indies*, p. 364.
  76. Linschoten, II, p. 64 ; Grose, *op. cit.*, I, p. 237.
  77. Petermundy, II, p. 97 ; *Storia*, I, p. 63 ; Linschoten, II, p. 68 ; Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 205 ; *Travels of Pedro Teixeira*, p. 200. According to the latter traveller it was served twice on the arrival of a guest and at the time of his departure.
  78. Bernier, p. 13 ; Linschoten, II, p. 68 ; *M.A.* (Talab), p. 199 refers to the offering of three *biras* of *pan* by Aurangzeb to Sikandar Adil. Also see *T.A.*, II (trans.), p. 371 ; *Travels of Pedro Teixeira*, p. 200. Pieter Van Den Brocke at Surat (trans.), W.H. Moreland, *J.I.H.* Vol. XI, 1932, p. 4.
  79. *T.A.*, p. 263 ; *India in the 15th Century*, p. 31.
  80. Alberuni refers to it when he writes : "In shaking hands they grasp the hand of a man from the convex side"—

- Alberuni (Sachau), Vol. II, p. 182. Nizam-ud-din refers to it in Mughal times. Bairam Khan was killed by a Nuhani Afghan when the former was shaking hands with the latter.
81. For various modes of Hindu salutations refer to *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, Vol. VI, (1930-32), 359-83.
  82. *Storia*, III, pp. 37-38.
  83. Name of a Hindu *avatar*, Lord Rama, the hero of the Ramayana. P. Thomas, *Hindu Religion, Customs and Manners*, p. 80.
  84. *First Englishmen in India*, p. 105 ; Thevenot, Chap. xxxvii, p. 65 ; Herbert's *Travels* p. 45.
  85. *Namaste* meaning "greeting to you" is the modern epithet for the same, "The Maratha Poet-Saint Dasopant Digamber" by Justice E. Abbot, *Journal American Oriental Society*, Vol. 42, pp. 268 and 278. There is a reference to *Sashtanga Namaskara*, *Ibid.*, p. 278. See Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 80 ; Dubois, *Hindu Manners and Customs*, Vol. I, pp. 329-30 ; Baboo Ishuree Dass, *Domestic Manners and Customs of the Hindoos of Northern India*, p. 131.
  86. *Storia*, III, p. 38 ; *Early Travels*, p. 19 ; De Laet, p. 81.
  87. *Storia*, III, p. 38 ; Thevenot, Chap. xxxvii, p. 65.
  88. Ovington, pp. 183-84 ; De Laet, p. 81. For Dasopant Digamber, the Maratha poet, prostrating before his mother, refer to *Journal American Oriental Society*, Vol. 42, p. 268. Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 80 ; Ishuree Dass, *Domestic Manners and Customs of the Hindoos*, pp. 130-31.
  89. *Storia*, III, p. 38 ; Bartolomeo, p. 161 ; *Bhakta Lilamrita*, J.R.A.S., Bombay Branch, Vol. III, p. 127. For a disciple prostrating before his Guru see Plate XII, Indian Drawings by Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.
  90. *Storia*, III, p. 38.
  91. *Ibid.* *Bulletin of School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. XII (1948), p. 627. Ramesvar Bhatt of Wagholi, we are told in *Bhakta Lilamrita*, felt his whole body burning due to a curse from a Muslim fakir. He was advised to ask for the fakir's forgiveness. He reply, how-

- ever, was : "How can I, a Brahman, fall at a Musalman's feet ?" *J.R.A.S. Bombay Branch* Vol. III, p. 22.
92. *Storia*, III, p. 38 ; Nieuhoff's *Voyages*, p. 222 ; Orme's *Fragments*, pp. 432-34 ; Bartolomeo, p. 160. Brahmans would then bless him. For an earlier reference see *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. XII, p. 627, "Gardizi on India."
  93. *Storia*, III, p. 38.
  94. Macauliffe, *Sikh Religion*, Vol. I, p. 49.
  95. *T.A.*, II, p. 193 (Trans.).
  96. Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, p. 138 ; Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 563 ; Crooke's *Islam in India*, p. 186. It means "Peace be on you."
  97. "And on you be the peace, too."
  98. *T.A.*, II, p. 192 (trans.). Also see Macauliffe, I, pp. 52-53.
  99. Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, p. 138.
  100. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 181 ; Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 247 ; Ovington, pp. 183-84 ; *Jahangir's India*, p. 67 ; De Laet, p. 91. This custom of lifting the hand to head or any motion of the body in salutation is not in accordance with the tradition. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 563.
  101. Mandelslo, p. 64.
  102. De Laet, p. 81.
  103. Mandelslo, p. 64 ; De Laet, p. 91 ; *Jahangir's India*, p. 67.
  104. Ovington, pp. 183-84 ; De Laet, p. 91 ; *Jahangir's India*, p. 67 ; *Storia*, III, p. 37.
  105. *Jahangir's India*, p. 67.
  106. Ovington, p. 195.
  107. Tavernier, I, p. 234.
  108. *Storia*, II, p. 354.
  109. Whenever a picture of the king was brought, the noble would leave his seat and bow down in all reverence. Padshah-Buranjis, trans. in *Islamic Culture*, April, 1934, p. 434.
  110. As to its beginning Akbar is said to have related to Abul Fazl as follows ; "One day my royal father bestowed upon me one of his own caps which I put on. Because the cap of the king was rather large, I had to hold it with my (right) hand whilst bending my head downwards and thus

performed the manner of salutation (*kornish*) above described. The king was pleased with the new method and from his feeling of propriety, ordered this to be the mode of *kornish* and *taslim*." *Ain*, I, p. 167.

111. *Ain*, I, p. 166. According to Abul Fazl the saluter thus places himself at the complete disposal of the king. He writes : "His Majesty's sons and grandchildren, the grantees of the court and all other men who have admittance attend to make the *kornish*." *Ain*, I, p. 166.
112. Lit, the act of praying for peace. (Hughes' *Dictionary*, p. 563). It is also the benediction at the close of the usual form of prayer (Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 628). Also see Bernier, p. 214; *Darbar-i-Akbari*, p. 132. Akbar is said to have originated this mode of salutation. In other Muslim countries the mode of salutation consisted in folding the arms over the breast and then bending the head. *Ain*, I, p. 158 ; Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, p. 138.
113. *Ain*, I (1939), p. 167. It signified, according to Abul Fazl, that the person is ready to give himself as an offering. Della Valle also refers to it. Della Valle, I, p. 38 ; *Maasir*, I, p. 585.
114. Ovington, pp. 183-84.
115. Della Valle, I, p. 38.
116. *B.N.*, p. 641.
117. *Ain*, I (1939), p. 167. *Maasir*, I, p. 586. Bernier relates how every noble on guard used to perform *taslim* thrice on receiving the meals supplied by the royal kitchen. Bernier, p. 258 ; Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 243.
118. Ovington, pp. 183-84.
119. *T.A.*, II, p. 477 ; *Maasir*, I, p. 570.
120. Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, p. 137.
121. *M.A.*, pp. 98, 272, quoted in *Ibid*.
122. Lit. prostration. "As a religious observance the prostration is . . . on the forehead, the two hands, the two knees and the toes of both feet. Women must touch the ground with the elbows, men on the contrary must keep the elbows up." Badaoni, I (trans.), p. 612, f.n. 3.
123. *Ain*, I (1939), p. 167, f.n. 1. It was invented by Nizam

- of Badakshan. *Ibid.*, p. 487 ; *Maasir*, I, p. 585.
124. *Ain*, I (1939), p. 167. Aziz Koka hated this custom and was reluctant to attend the court. *Maasir*, I, p. 325. Also see Chester Beatty, Vol. II, Plate 26 f. 157b, "Akbar receiving homages of nobles of Gujarat. One of the nobles prostrates before him."
125. *Ibid* ; *Maasir*, I, p. 586.
126. *Lubb-ut-Tawarikh* of Rai Bhara Mal. E & D, VII, p. 170. *Darbar-i-Akbari*, p. 133. It was observed at the court of Siraj-ud-daulah even in 1757. Refer to *J.R.A.S.*, Bombay Branch, Vol. XXIV, p. 324. Anquetil Du Perron of Paris India as seen by him (1755-60) by Shams-ul-Ulma Jivanji Jamshedji Modi.
127. *Ibid.* *Maasir*, I, p. 586, says that *taslim* was ordered to be observed four times. Rai Bhara Mal of *Lubb-ut-Tawarikh-i-Hind* says this act was ordered to be performed several times. E & D, Vol. VII, p. 170.
128. Bernier, pp. 117, 204.
129. Bernier, p. 152.
130. *M.A.* (Urdu), p. 98.
131. Sarkar, *Anecdotes of Aurangzib*, p. 75.
132. Despatches of John Josua Ketelaar, Ambassador of Dutch East India Company, translated into English in *Journal of the Punjab Historical Society*, Vol. X, pp. 14, 16.
133. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- 133\*. Khafi Khan, Vol. II, p. 213 ; *Tuzuk*, III, p. 45 ; *Guldasta*, Munshi Chandra Bhan, p. 4 ; Sharma, S.R., *Religious Policy of the Mughals*, p. 43.

## CHAPTER 9

# Charity and Fasts

## CHARITY

### A virtue of both communities

Charity<sup>1</sup> has been enjoined upon their followers by the religious scriptures of both the communities.<sup>2</sup> Rig-Veda says: "He who gives charity goes to the highest place in heaven." Manu<sup>3</sup> and Prophet Muhammad<sup>4</sup> lay down definite rules to be followed for acquiring this religious merit. The grant of precious metals, especially gold and silver, estates, buildings, and cows is considered highly meritorious among Hindus.<sup>5</sup> *Zakat*, the annual legal alms<sup>6</sup> of five things, viz., money, cattle, grain, fruit and merchandise, is obligatory on every Muslim.<sup>7</sup> The building of temples<sup>8</sup> and mosques<sup>9</sup> had its own merit among Hindus and Muslims respectively.

People seem to have been more charitable of disposition in Mughal days than in the twentieth century. Abul Fazl admires the Indians who were always ready to come to the succour of anyone in distress and would "grudge neither property, life nor reputation in his cause."<sup>10</sup> Alms were frequently bestowed on the needy and the deserving. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* says: "Let them be charitable, according to their means, to all religious mendicants, and to all poor, indigent, and naked persons who will not open their mouths to ask for the means of subsistence and have secluded themselves from the world."<sup>11</sup> Guru Nanak said: "The wealth of those who have not given alms shall slip away."<sup>12</sup> Though no hard and fast rules were adhered to, Hindus preferred to give away edibles like rice, wheat, etc. in charity,<sup>13</sup> while Muslims believed in offering garments, blankets, sheets, and shoes.<sup>14</sup>



### Liberality of the Hindus

The liberality of the Hindus has particularly been commended by several travellers<sup>15</sup> including Alberuni who mentioned alms-giving as the daily routine of a Hindu<sup>16</sup> "who strongly believed that such acts would atone for all his sins."<sup>17</sup> Tavernier corroborates: "They would gladly offer to the travellers whatever they required anything to eat or drink."<sup>18</sup> Guru Nanak's travels afford several instances.<sup>19</sup> Brahmins, the usual recipients of such alms, were never refused.<sup>20</sup> Even Tukaram did not hesitate to part with his hard-earned money when demanded by a Brahmin.<sup>21</sup> Most of the alms-houses were attached to temples and they catered to the needs of the pilgrims and needy scholars. In fact, villages had been endowed for the purpose by Rajas and other rich persons.<sup>21\*</sup> Money was also offered to the needy and the deserving.<sup>22</sup> Monthly allowances were fixed for widows, the pious and the needy.<sup>23</sup>

Abul Fazl used to visit the houses of the *derveshes* at night to distribute money.<sup>24</sup> Sometimes an ascetic or *faqir* undertook a fast unto death to compel a rich *bania* or a pious audience to give him a fixed sum of money,<sup>25</sup> or even to accede to some other demand.<sup>26</sup> When on a pilgrimage, it was customary to give as much money in alms as possible.<sup>27</sup>

### Charity by Mughal kings

Mughal kings were very particular in giving away a large sum of money in charity. Akbar had fixed daily, monthly and yearly allowances for the deserving.<sup>28</sup> Abul Fazl writes that a crore of *dams* was kept ready in the audience hall for distribution among the poor and the needy.<sup>29</sup> Haji Begam, wife of Humayun, is said to have paid maintenance allowance to about five hundred needy persons.<sup>29\*</sup> Nurjahan helped the poor and orphan girls by providing dowries for their marriages.<sup>29+</sup> More food and bread were freely distributed to the poor on the fulfilment of a desire such as the birth of a son.<sup>30</sup> Jahanara distributed fifty thousand rupees to the poor on the recovery from illness of her father Shahjahan.<sup>30\*</sup> Festivals like *Nauroz*,<sup>31</sup> *Salgirah Ids*,<sup>32</sup> *Shab-i-Barat*,<sup>34</sup> etc. were the special occasions for a king to show his generosity, and Mughal emperors were never found lacking.

Charity was also resorted to in order to avert the evil effects

of the stars, especially on eclipse days.<sup>35</sup> On his death-bed, Aurangzeb refused to give an elephant and a diamond in charity as desired by the astrologers, as he considered it to be a practice of the Hindus. The Emperor, however, sent Rs. 4,000 to be distributed among the poor.<sup>36</sup> In his last will he wrote that the three hundred and five rupees earned by him as wages from copying the *Quran* might be distributed among the *faqirs* on the day of his death.<sup>37</sup> Akbar, on the other hand, is said to have given to the Jain monks 500 cows in charity after his recovery from serious illness.<sup>38</sup> The custom of *Zakat*, it seems, was not observed by the majority of Muhammadans, who would try their best to avoid it. Badaoni relates the instance of Makhdum-ul-Mulk who made over his property to his wife at the end of the year for this purpose and took it back.<sup>39</sup>

#### Provision of drinking-water by the roadside

Hindus and Muslims, the former in particular, considered it highly meritorious to make arrangements for drinking-water on roadways especially during the summer season.<sup>40</sup> Linschoten found large water-pots left on the roads in Cambay for this purpose.<sup>41</sup> The rich would spend huge amounts of money to dig wells<sup>42</sup> and construct tanks<sup>43</sup> for storing water to be availed of during times of scarcity. Jahangir in the 14th year of his reign ordered that wells should be dug at every three *kroh* (12,000 yards) from Agra to Delhi.<sup>44</sup> Jahangir's mother, known as Maryam-uz-Zamani, built a *baoli* or step-well in the pargana of Jasut. A sum of Rs. 20,000 was spent on its construction.<sup>44\*</sup> Bernier<sup>45</sup> and Thevenot<sup>46</sup> refer to the existence of these wells. Gopi Talao in Surat has been referred to by many a traveller.<sup>47</sup> Thevenot writes about it thus : "It is a work worthy of a king and it may be compared to the fairest that the Romans ever made for public benefit."<sup>48</sup>

#### Provision of wayside rest-houses

The Brahman wife of Abdur Rahim of Lucknow built houses, made a garden, a *sarai* and a tank after her husband's demise.<sup>49</sup> Rai Gaurdhan Suraj Dhvaj, who flourished during the reign of Jahangir, is said to have built *sarais* and tanks on the road from Delhi to Lahore.<sup>50</sup> *Sarais* or inns were also

constructed by rich Hindus and Muslims as a charitable means at all important places for the convenience of travellers.<sup>51</sup> Sher Shah's *sarais*,<sup>52</sup> Salim Khan's later additions,<sup>53</sup> Nurjah's *Nur Mahal-ki-Sarai* at Agra<sup>54</sup> and a similar one at Patna<sup>55</sup> Begam Sahib's famous *caravan-sarai* at Kirki<sup>56</sup> deserve special mention. The famous *Arab Sarai* was built by Haji Begam, wife of Humayun. It was meant to serve as a resting-place for Arab travellers and merchants.<sup>56A</sup> There is evidence to show that Sher Shah constructed or repaired about 1700 *sarais*. Akbar issued orders to *kotwals* to build *sarais* wherever necessary.<sup>56C</sup> Arrangements for drinking-water were also made at regular intervals. For example, wells were dug on Agra and Ajmer road.<sup>56D</sup> Zinat-un-Nisa Begam is said to have built about fourteen *sarais* in different parts of the country.<sup>56E</sup> Fruit-trees were planted on roadsides for the benefit of the public.<sup>57</sup> In order to earn spiritual merit the pious people got small stone tables, about 3 yards in length, constructed near these *sarais*. These were meant to help weary porters to put off and take up the luggage conveniently without anybody's help.<sup>59</sup> Rudolf and two other Christian fathers saw such stone-tables at almost every step after crossing the Tapti River on their way to the court of the Great Mughal.<sup>60</sup> Two poor houses were constructed by Akbar in 1583 A.D.<sup>61</sup> Jahangir ordered the preparation of *ghawar khanas* throughout the length and breadth of this country. Cooked food was to be kept ready for *dervishes*, devotees and pilgrims in these places.<sup>62</sup> The author of *Maasir-ul-Umra* praises Farid Murtuza Khan Bukhari, a courtier of Akbar, for his magnanimity. Several *sarais* and mosques are ascribed to him. He had made it a custom to feed about a thousand persons daily.<sup>63</sup> Husain Ali Khan's *bulghur khanas* (barley-houses) where he served the *shaikhs* and *faqirs* personally were well-known.<sup>64</sup> Similarly Bakhtawar Khan, a noble of Aurangzeb's court, built a number of inns, bridges, wells, tanks, and mosques. Shaista Khan and Mir Jumla built a number of inns or rest-houses and bridges.<sup>64\*</sup> During the acute famine conditions in Kambhalmir, Nawazish Khan was so generous enough to sell his dishes of gold and silver for helping the people.<sup>65</sup>

### Charity to birds and beasts

Strict believers in the transmigration of souls,<sup>66</sup> the Hindus were particularly charitable towards birds and beasts<sup>67</sup> Hospitals were constructed at some places, especially in southern India,<sup>68</sup> for their treatment and maintenance. Manrique saw cows and calves "clothed in fine coats buttoned and tied over their chests and bellies" in Gujarat.<sup>69</sup> Quite frequently a bania would be seen scattering flour and sugar to feed little ants.<sup>70</sup> Stables for cows, buffaloes, mares, camels, goats and sheep were also built by munificent persons. Rai Gaurdhan, who got them constructed on the style of those in a foreign land, deserves special mention.<sup>71</sup>

### Hospitals for the public

Public hospitals, too, are referred to in Mughal records. Jahangir<sup>72</sup> ordered their establishment in the principal towns of the Empire where physicians were to attend upon the sick. All the expenses were to be defrayed from the royal exchequer. *Mirat-i Ahmadi*<sup>73</sup> gives some details about their working.<sup>74</sup>

### Charitable funds of the state

We may refer here to *Bait-ul-mal*<sup>75</sup> which was in fact the charitable department's store-house. It looked after the belongings of those left without heirs and escheated property of the nobles.<sup>76</sup> Its funds, according to Muhammadan law, could be spent only in works of charity. Jahangir's *farman* of 1605 clearly laid it down that its funds should be spent in building mosques and *sarais*, repairing broken bridges and digging tanks and wells.<sup>77</sup> Aurangzeb refused to lay his hands upon this source even when his treasury had been emptied during the Deccan wars.<sup>78</sup> He made elaborate arrangements for the proper conduct of this department.<sup>79</sup> The Qazi of Ahmedabad was instructed to supply 150 coats and 150 blankets to beggars every winter out of this account besides Rs. 6,000 allotted for the clothing of the poor.<sup>80</sup> The Emperor (Aurangzeb) in his religious zeal went to the length of pardoning Mir Habibullah of Jaunpur, the Amir of poll-tax on non-Muslims, who had misappropriated over Rs. 40,000 from the Imperial treasury as "the money of this sinner (Aurangzeb)

sunk in sin has been spent by means of this my agent in of charity."<sup>81</sup>

### Charity in holy places

Among Muhammadans it was considered meritorious to spend money in charity at their holy places like Mecca, Meshad, etc. There are numerous instances when the Mughal kings<sup>82</sup> and their nobles<sup>83</sup> would send money besides carpets, blankets, etc. to be distributed among the needy there.<sup>84</sup> Shah Jahan was liberal enough to undertake to bear the cost of the maintenance of the tomb of the Prophet for fifty years.<sup>85</sup> Haji Mohammad Anwar-ud-din Khan<sup>86</sup> distributed nine lakhs of rupees among "the great men and the gentle" of holy places. Sahibji, the wife of Amir Khan, also spent large sums at Mecca.<sup>87</sup> Lashkar Khan, a noble of Aurangzeb's court, founded *sarais* in Meshad.<sup>88</sup>

## FASTS

### Fasts among Hindus

From ancient times fasts have been observed with great fervour in the Indian society.<sup>89</sup> The purposes of fasting as a religious, magical or social custom are various. As a means of penitence<sup>90</sup> or of propitiation, as a preparatory rite to some acts of sacramental eating or an initiation or a marriage ceremony or one of a series of purificatory rites,<sup>91</sup> as a means of inducing dreams and visions and a method of adding force to magical rites,<sup>92</sup> it has been resorted to by both communities. Alberuni describes at length this custom which he describes as "voluntary and supererogatory" with the Hindus.<sup>93</sup> Fazl has written about its 12 different kinds, and enumerates 29 days on which a Hindu was obliged to fast for 24 hours every year.<sup>94</sup> It includes the anniversaries of the ten avatars, as well as the eleventh day of each lunar fortnight of every month.<sup>95</sup>

Besides these obligatory fasts, most Hindus abstain from food frequently as a means of self-discipline<sup>96</sup> and on other grounds.<sup>97</sup> Thevenot corroborates it, though with some exaggeration, that "none of them let a fortnight pass without mortifying himself by abstinence."<sup>98</sup> They

even resort to this practice to cure several diseases.<sup>99</sup> In fact, a fast or even the practice of austerity in life was considered to be of religious merit.<sup>100</sup> Brahmans<sup>101</sup> and women<sup>102</sup> were naturally more particular about it. These fasts might be complete or partial and for a longer or shorter period.<sup>103</sup> in the case of either category of people. The longer fasts might last for a month<sup>104</sup> or even six weeks which Mandelslo rightly regards as nothing less than a miracle.<sup>105</sup> It was usual to take water sometimes mixed with *chiraeta*<sup>103</sup> on all these fast days. Fruits, sweetmeats and milk preparations were allowed to be taken during certain obligatory fasts.<sup>107</sup> The curious reader may refer to the *Ain-i-Akbari* for a contemporary account of all the details.<sup>108</sup> It was forbidden to take meat, pulse (*adas cicerlens*), the bean *lobiya* (*dobchos sinesis*), honey and molasses during the fast days.<sup>109</sup> It was equally objectionable to anoint oneself with oil, to shave or to have sexual intercourse.<sup>110</sup> The playing of games like *chaupar* or *solah*, was also prohibited.<sup>111</sup> It was considered highly meritorious to give alms and sleep on the ground on fast days.<sup>112</sup>

### Fasts among Muslims

Though Islam is not an ascetic religion, the value of fasting as discipline and a good deed is clearly recognised and it is said that "the very smell of the mouth of a keeper of fast is more agreeable to God than the smell of musk."<sup>113</sup> Penitential fasting was highly commended by Prophet Muhammad himself.<sup>114</sup> Every Muslim is obliged to fast during the whole month of Ramzan<sup>115</sup> when none may eat or drink between dawn and sunset.<sup>116</sup> The fast was rigorously and strictly observed during Mughal days.<sup>117</sup> They would neither drink nor smoke nor have sexual intercourse.<sup>118</sup> The orthodox prayed day and night.<sup>119</sup> The sick, infirm, travellers, idiots, and young children were, however, exempted.<sup>120</sup> In 1650 A.D., when Shahjahan was over sixty and could not bear the rigours of the Ramzan fast, learned *maulavis* declared after consulting the *Quran* that the king should give money in charity instead. A sum of sixty thousand rupees was distributed among the poor that year.<sup>121</sup> Akbar was not used to fasting, as a remark of a Christian missionary, Rudolf, suggests.<sup>122</sup> Aurangzeb strictly observed all the fasts and would abstain from food even on

Fridays.<sup>123</sup> A fast was sometimes undertaken to give solemnity to an occasion. Humayun fasted for a day when oaths of confederacies were taken.<sup>124</sup>

### NOTES

1. It implies alms-giving as well as kindness and affection. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 50.
2. Hindus and Muslims.
3. E.R.E. *op. cit.*, III, p. 388. A chapter of *Skanda Purana* and the second part of *Hemadri* deal with the rules for alms-giving. Abul Fazl enumerates 16 kinds of *dana* or alms, viz., *Tula-dana*, *Hiranyagarbha-dana*, *Brahmanda-dana*, *Kalpa-taru-dana*, *Go-Sahasra-dana*, *Hiranya-Kama-dhenu-dana*, *Hiranyasva-dana*, *Hiranyasva-ratha-dana*, *Hemahashthi-ratha-dana*, *Panchalangala-dana*, *Dhara-dana*, *Visva-chakra-dana*, *Kalpalata-dana*, *Sapta-sagara-dana*, *Ratna-dhenu-dana*, *Mahabuta-ghata-dana*. For details refer to *Ain*, III (Sarkar), pp. 305-7 and E.R.E., III, pp. 387-89 (under Charity).
4. E.R.E., V., p. 502; Hughes, *op. cit.*, pp. 14, 50, 699; Baillie NBE, *A Digest of Muhammadan Law*, 2nd edition, London, 1875, p. 555. Herklots' *Islam in India*, pp. 113-14.
5. The *mahadana* (great gifts) are sixteen in number. E.R.E., III, p. 389. Phillips in his "An Account of the Religion, Manners and Learning of the People of Malabar" details the various acts regarded as virtuous by the natives. It includes "alms consisting of boiled rice to feed the poor, the Brahmans, other holy men (or alms consisting in garments), *Kamatatum* (when a rich man gives his daughter to a poor man or helps a poor man to settle his daughter in marriage), *Fischoranatanum* (alms consisting of money) to build places of worship, to make ponds of water for the convenience of men and beasts, to build homes for travellers, to build hospitals, to plant gardens, to set up *piaos* for drinking-water, to plant trees on the high-ways and to bring up orphans, and assist learned men to live comfortably that they may be able to instruct the

- ignorant." (pp. 18-19). Also see Orme's *Fragments*, p. 434.
6. For details see Herkiots' *Islam*, pp. 113-14; E.R.E., V, p. 502. Legal alms may be given to the following classes of pilgrims who are unable to defray the cost of their journey: *faqirs* and beggars, debtors unable to pay their debts, champions in the cause of God, travellers who are without food, proselytes to Islam. Herklot's *Islam*, p. 114.
  7. The duty is not incumbent on a man who owes debts equal to or exceeding the whole amount of his property nor is it due on the necessities of life such as dwelling houses, clothes, furniture, etc. Herklots' *Islam*, p. 114.
  8. *Maasir*, I, p. 526; Orme's *Fragments*, p. 434. Even Marathas levied special occasional contributions to build public works like temples. Raghubir Singh, *Malwa in Transition*, p. 332.
  9. *Maasir*, I, pp. 423-25, for a mosque built during Babar's reign refer to J.I.H. Vol. XI, pp. 190-91. For Mahabat Khan's mosque at Peshawar, *Islamic Culture*, Vol. XIV, No. 1, January 1940, pp. 30-32. Also see *Oriental College Magazine*, Lahore, Vol. 16, Pt. I, November 1939, pp. 59-60. For mosque built by Jahanara Begam at Kashmir refer to P. Saran's *Provincial Government of the Mughals*, p. 418; Phillips' *Account of East Indies*, pp. 18-19.
  10. *Ain*, III, p. 9.
  11. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, translated from Persian by James Bird, London, MDCCCXXXV.
  12. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, I, p. 14.
  13. Della Valle, p. 69; Tavernier, I, p. 225; Thevenot, p. 93; Phillips' *Account of East Indies*, pp. 18-19; Macauliffe, I, pp. 14, 206. Orme's *Fragments*, p. 434.
  14. *Maasir*, I, pp. 525, 693, etc. It was the general practice but should not be taken as a rule. During the Deccan campaigns Abul Fazl used to distribute cooked *khichri* among the poor and the needy throughout the day. *Maasir*, I, p. 127.
  15. Tavernier, I, p. 225; Della Valle, I, p. 69; Thevenot, p. 93; Orme's *Fragments*, p. 431.



16. Alberuni's *India*, II (Sachau), p. 149 ; Orme's *Fragments*, p. 434.
17. Orme's *Fragments*, p. 431.
18. Tavernier, I, p. 225. Also see *J.R.A.S.* Bombay, Vol. III, p. 18.
19. Guru Nanak and Shaikh Ibrahim were served with a basin of milk by an unknown villager in Pak Pattan where they stayed for a while. Macauliffe, I, p. 88.
20. *Asiatick Researches*. Vol. IV, p. 332.
21. *J.R.A.S.*, Bombay Branch, Vol. III, pp. 16, 23.
- 21.\* Refer to Mazumdar, B.P, *The Socio-Economic History of North India*, pp. 262-63.
22. Tavernier, I, p. 52.
23. *Maasir*, I, p. 526. Even marriage expenses of the poor children were defrayed. *Ibid*.
24. *Maasir*, I, p. 126.
25. Tavernier, II, p. 173 relates how a Brahman priest at Patna demanded Rs. 2,000 and 27 cubits of cloth under a similar threat. Also see Thevenot, p. 93. Even Muslim mendicants obtained alms from Hindus by resorting to this practice. M.S. Commissariat, *History of Gujarat*. For the Hindu custom of "Dying to redress a grievance" refer to *Journal of American Oriental Society*, Vol. 21.
26. *Asiatick Researches*, Vol. IV, pp. 332, 334. Sometimes Brahmans were employed even for realising the debts by calling upon the debtor to discharge his debt within a stipulated period.
27. *Storia*, II, p. 244 ; *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 272.
28. *Ain*, I (1939), p. 276. For Gulbadan's charities refer to her *Humayunnama*, trans., pp. 76-77.
29. *Ain*, I, p. 14. A separate treasurer had been appointed for charitable donations. *Ibid*. Also see *Ain*, I (1939), p. 276.
- 29.\* Monserrate, p. 96.
- 29.\* E & D, VI, p. 405. Also see Beni Prasad, p. 185.
- 29.- Qazwini, *Badshahnama*, Vol. III, f. 572.
30. See Plate 21, "The Library of Chester Beatty," Vol. II.
31. P.N. Chopra, *Society and Culture during the Mughal Age*, second edition, 1963, pp. 84-89.
32. *Ibid.*, pp. 89-93.

33. *Ibid.*, pp. 103-61.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 102.
35. R & B, I, pp. 160, 267. When Begam Sahiba was confined to bed due to burns, various charitable measures were adopted. Prisoners were released ; debts were remitted ; maintenance allowances were restored. *Maasir*, Vol. I, p. 739. Also see *Journal Punjab Historical Society*, Vol. X, p. 4.
36. E & D, VII, p. 386. Also see *M.A.* (Urdu), p. 28.
37. Sarkar, *Anecdotes of Aurangzib*, p. 46.
38. *A.N.* Vol. III (trans), p. 313, quoted in A.L. Srivastava, *Akbar the Great*, Vol. I, p. 398.
39. Badaoni, II, p. 203 ; Tr. II, p. 206.
40. *Early Travels*, p. 325 ; *Storia*, I, p. 214 ; Linschoten, I, p. 254 ; Ketelaar, the Dutch ambassador in 1711 saw a *baoli* or step-well built at Shazpur in Gwalior state in memory of a dog by a Hindu merchant. *Travels of Dutch Ambassador Ketelaar*, trans. into English in *Punjab Historical Society Journal*, Vol. X, p. 85. Phillips' *Account*, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19.
41. Linschoten, I, p. 254. Also see Tavernier, I, p. 225.
42. *Early Travels*, p. 325 ; Thevenot, Chapter XXXIV, p. 81, and Francis Goldie, *The First Christian Mission to the Great Mogul*, p. 60.
43. Della Valle, I, p. 32 ; Linschoten, I, 254 ; *Storia*, III, p. 242. For a pond built by Raja Todar Mal refer to *A.N.* III, p. 569 ; Tr. III, p. 862.
44. R & B, II, p. 100. A well ascribed to Humayun's reign has been discovered in a village called Pilakhnab about 14 miles from Aligarh. For details refer to *J.I.H.* Vol. XI, pp. 190-91. For a well built by a copper-smith from the money he received in charity refer to *J.R.A.S.*, Bombay, Vol. III, p. 16.
- 44.\* R & B, II, p. 111.
45. Bernier (Smith's edition), p. 284.
46. Thevenot, III, pp. 42-43.
47. Della Valle, I, p. 32 ; Thevenot, p. 34 ; Fryer (old), p. 104 ; *T.A.*, II (trans.), p. 384 ; Anup Talao has also been referred to vide *Babarnama*, II, Tr., pp. 204, 212, 219 and the *A.N.*, III, p. 246 ; Tr. III, p. 384 ; Jahangir

- mentions a similar tank called Kapur Talao ; *Tuzuk*, Tr., II, pp. 68-69 For controversy regarding the site of the tank see Hodivala's *Studies in Indo-Muslim History*, pp. 533, 545.
48. For details see Thevenot, pp. 25, 35. For the construction of a great bath at Lahore by Farid Murtaza Khan, Akbar's courtier, see *Maasir*, I, p. 526.
  49. *Maasir*, I (trans), p. 50. For reference to *sarais*, tanks, mosques, etc. built by Shaikh Farid see *Maasir*, I, p. 525.
  50. *Maasir*, I, p. 574. For another tank built by Raja Bir Singh Dev Bundela, see *Ibid.*, pp. 423-25.
  51. Thevenot, Chap. xxxiv, p. 81 ; *Storia*, III, p. 242 ; Bernier, p. 233 ; Careri (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 246 ; *Early Travels*, p. 325 ; *John Marshall in India*, pp. 112, 118, 125. He says that one can stay in a *sarai* for a month at the rate of 4 or 5 pice per month, p. 118. Edward Terry in *Early Travels*, p. 311 ; De Laet, p. 32. Also *J.I.H.*, Vol. X, 1931, p. 245.
  52. *T.A.*, II, pp. 174-75. For details see K.R. Qanungo, *Sher Shah*, pp. 389-91. E & D, VI, p. 188 ; IV, p. 418. P. Saran's *Provincial Government of the Mughals*, p. 410. Also see *Storia*, I, p. 116
  53. *T.A.*, II, p. 190. He is said to have added another room to each of the sarais of Sher Shah from Nilab to Bengal. *T.A.*, II, p. 190.
  54. Petermundy, II (Hak. Society), p. 78.
  55. *Ibid.*, p. 159.
  56. *Journal Punjab Historical Society*, Vol. II, No. 2, p. 15. Tavernier, I, p. 41. For sarais built by Akbar refer to *A.N.*, III (Tr.), p. 155 ; *Ain*, I (Bloch), p. 222.
  - 56.<sup>a</sup> Monserrate, p. 96.
  - 56.<sup>b</sup> *Cambridge History of India*, IV, p. 57.
  - 56.<sup>c</sup> *Ain*, II, p. 44.
  - 56.<sup>d</sup> *A.N.*, III, 156.
  - 56.<sup>e</sup> Norris, *op. cit.*, p. 236.
  57. *Ain*, II, p. 353 ; Phillips' *Account*, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19. For Jahangir refer to Thevenot, Pt. III, pp. 42-43 ; Bernier (Smith), p. 284 and for a sarai built in Aurangzeb's reign at Nurabad (14 miles from Gwalior along Delhi-Gwalior-Bombay Trunk Road) refer to *Indian Historical Quarterly*,

- Vol. XVI, No. 3, Sept. 1940, pp. 592-95. For sarais at Surat refer to Godhinho's *Travels* (1663), *Calcutta Review*, Vol. XCIII, p. 69.
58. R & B, I, p. 420.
  59. Thevenot, Chapt xxxiv, p. 81.
  60. Francis Goldie, *The First Christian Mission to the Court of the Great Mogul*, p. 60.
  61. *Ibid.*, p. 95. They were named Khairpura and Dharm-pura. Later on another place called Jogipura was built. *Ain*, I, (1939), p. 210.
  62. *Tuzuk* (Lowe), pp 35, 61.
  63. *Maasir*, I, p. 526.
  64. *Ibid.*, p. 638.
  - 64.\* *Maasir-i-Alamgiri. op. cit.*, p. 223.
  65. *Maasir*, I, p. 400.
  66. Mandelslo, p. 58.
  67. Particularly cows. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 216; Thevenot, Pt. III, p. 36. Purchas' *India*, pp. 92-93. Orme's *Fragments*, p. 431. Also see E.R.E., *op cit.*, III, p. 389.
  68. Particularly at Cambay. Samuel Purchas' *India*, pp. 92-93. Linschoten, I, p. 254. For a hospital in Surat for the treatment of cows, horses, goats and other animals see Ovington, p. 390. The traveller refers to another hospital there meant for preservation of the bugs (Ovington, p. 301). Also see Stavorinus, II, pp. 489-90, who mentions the yearly revenue of the hospital in A.D. 1774-75 when it had suffered considerably to be Rs. 6,000. Also see "Notice of a remarkable hospital for animals at Surat (June 1893)." *Journal Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. I, pp. 96-97. Also see *J.R.A.S.*, Bombay Branch, Vol. XXIV, p. 356 for a reference to the hospital in 1756.
  69. Manrique, II, p. 102.
  70. Linschoten, I, p. 254; Ovington, p. 30. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 216; Thevenot, *op. cit.*, p. 36; Stavorinus, II, p. 486. Once Tukaram would not drive away the bees settled on his body, saying: "One should not spare one's own body when one can do others good." (*J.R.A.S.* Bombay, Vol. III, p. 20). For Tukaram's other

charitable acts refer to *Bhakta Lilamrita*, trans in English, *J.R.A.S.*, Bombay, Vol. III, p. 18.

71. *Maasir*, I, p. 574.
72. *Tuzuk* (Lowe), p. 8. The Eighth Institute.
73. *Mirat* (I.o) fol. p. 731a in Saran's *Provincial Government the Mughals*, pp. 419-20.
74. Elliot's views (V, p. 513) have no justification in view the contemporary records.
75. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol I, p. 598. Akbar himself supervised the Religious and Charity Department. Saran *op. cit.*, p. 404.
76. Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, p. 170. *Mirat-i-Ahmad* Vol. I (G.O. Series, 1927), pp. 266-67.
77. *Tuzuk*, 4, quoted in Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, p. 17.
78. Manucci, quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 178.
79. In 1690, Aurangzeb appointed provincial qazis as trustees of the branch of the *Bait-ul-mal* of their provinces. *Ibid.* p. 167,
80. *Ibid.*, p. 177.
81. Sarkar, *Anecdotes of Aurangzeb*, p. 93.
82. Akber sent 5 lakhs of rupees and 10,000 robes through Abu Tarab Gujarati to be distributed among the needy at Mecca. Shahjahan likewise sent 5 lakhs of rupees and goods worth 2 lakh and 40 thousand rupees to be sold at the money distributed among the needy there. *Maasir*, pp. 143, 825. Kh. Abid was appointed leader of the Haj party in 1676 by the Emperor. He was to take royal presents to Mecca and Medina. *Maasir-i-Alamgiri* (Bibliothèque Ind) 1871, p. 143. Also see Burhan's *Tuzuk-i-Walajabad* English trans., part I, p. 17.
83. *Maasir*, I, pp. 326-27 and 834. Kh. Abid visited Mecca in 1657 A.D. *Nizamul Mulk Asaf Jah I*, by Dr. Yusuf Khan, p. 2.
84. Rs. 60,000 was sent to Najaf and Karbala as a present on the recovery of Muhammad Azam. Rs. 120,000 was distributed among the poor of Mecca and Medina. Sarkar *Studies in Aurangzeb's Reign*, p. 72.
85. *Maasir*, I, pp. 326-27.
86. He received the title of the *Fairashi* (one who spreads)

## CHARITY AND FASTS

- carpets). Burhan's *Tuzuk-i-Walajahi*, English Trans., *op. cit.*, I, p. 17.
87. *Maasir*, I, p. 252. Also see Gulbadan Begam, *Humayun-nama* (trans.), pp. 69-72.
  88. *Ibid.*, p. 834.
  89. For this custom see Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. V, pp. 259-64 ; Dubois, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, I, pp. 271-75; Alberuni (Sachau), II, p. 172 ; *Ain*, III (Sarkar), pp. 327-28 ; and Phillips' *Account*, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-93.
  90. For details regarding the fast undertaken by a Brahman before commencing his studies in *Vedas* refer to "The Story of Tukarama" in *Journal Bombay Branch, Royal Asiatic Society*, January, 1849, Vol. III, p. 21.
  91. *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. V, p. 758.
  92. For a fast before writing magic see Crooke's *Islam*, p. 220. Also refer to *Hindu Ethics* by John Mackenzie, pp. 233-40.
  93. Alberuni (Sachau), II, p. 172.
  94. *Ain* (Sarkar), III, p. 326. For its various kinds see *Ibid.*, pp. 326-27. Alberuni (Sachau), II, pp. 172-73 ; Dubois, I, pp. 271-75. Mandelslo and William Hedges describe August and September as months of fasting. Mandelslo, p. 54 ; Hedges, II, p. cccxiv. Also see Phillips' *Account*, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-93.
  95. *Ain* (Sarkar), III, p. 326 ; Dubois, I, pp. 271-72.
  96. *Ganda-Lekhmala*, I, pp. 6, 31 ; *Indian Culture*, Vol. X, No. 3, p. 98.
  97. Thevenot, *op. cit.*, p. 115 ; Dubois, I, p. 274.
  98. *Ibid.* ; Pyard, I, p. 479.
  99. Careri (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 274.
  100. Mandelslo, p. 54 ; Hamilton, I (MDCCXXVII), p. 129. Purchas' *India*, p. 92. Also see Thevenot, p. 93, for fasting as a penance to acquire divine blessings. Phillips' *Account*, pp. 88-93. The *Vaishnavites* of Nadia were very particular about the fasts. "Social and Religious Life in Medieval Bengal" by Taponath Chakravarty, *Indian Culture*, Vol. X, No. 3, January-March, 1944.
  101. Mandelslo, p. 53 ; William Hedges, Vol. II, p. cccxiv, f.n.
  102. Thevenot, p. 115.
  103. *Ain* (Sarkar), III, pp. 326-27.

104. Thevenot, Chap. XLVII, p. 82; Mandelslo, p. 54. *Purchase India*, p. 92. Tavernier, II, p. 173.
105. Mandelslo, p. 54.
106. A bitter root. It is said to be useful against dtemper and it also strengthens the gums. Thevenot, Chap. XLVI, p. 82. Mandelslo, p. 54. Also see Pyrard, I, p. 379.
107. Hedges, II, p. cccxiv f.n. ; also see *Ain* (Sarkar), III, p. 326-27.
108. *Ain* (Sarkar), III, pp. 327-28.
109. *Ibid*, p. 328.
110. *Ibid* ; Dubois, I, pp. 272-73.
111. *Ain* (Sarkar), III, p. 328.
112. *Ibid*.
113. *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. V, p. 76. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 124.
114. For details see E.R.E., V, p. 764.
115. The 13th, 14th and 15th day of each month are generally observed as fasting days and also the day *Ashura*, the 10th day of the month of Muharram, E.R.E. Vol. V. p. 764. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 124. The other fasts observed by the devout are the six days following the *Id-ul-Fitr*, Monday and Thursday every week, the month of Shaban and on alternate days. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 124. For fast after death, see Herklots' *Islam*, pp. 91 and 105.
116. The sick, infirm, travellers, idiots and young children are however, exempted. Also see Ovington, p. 243 : E.R.E. V, p. 764 ; Herklots' *Islam*, p. 112.
117. Ovington, p. 243 ; Della Valle, p. 429 ; *Storia*, I, pp. 159. *Letters received by East India Company*, Vol. I, p. 10 ; *Jahangir's India*, p. 73.
118. Della Valle, p. 429 ; Herklots' *Islam*, p. 205 ; Ovington, p. 243 ; *Jahangir's India*, p. 73. The use of betel-leaf and tobacco or snuff is also forbidden. Herklots' *Islam*, p. 112.
119. Ovington, p. 243.
120. E.R.E., V, p. 764.
121. Inayat Khan, *Shahjahannama*, E & D, VII, p. 97.
122. Rudolf, the Christian missionary, is said to have induced Akbar to fast for a day. *First Christian Mission to Great Mogul*, p. 95. Also refer to "The Annual Relation

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- Father Fernao Guerreior S.J. from 1607-8" by Re. H. Hoster S.J. in *Journal Punjab Historical Society*, Vol. VII, p. 55.
123. E & D, VII, p 157. Muhammad did not ordain fast on Fridays. See Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, pp. 131-32; Herklots' *Islam*, pp. 206, 282.
124. Jauhar's *Tazkirat-ul-Waqyat* (trans.) by Charles Stewart p. 99.



## CHAPTER 10

# Houses and Furniture

## HOUSES

### General

Houses in India have always been built with due consideration to climatic conditions. As most of the country is within the tropics, it has ever been the endeavour of our architects to use architectural devices like pierced screens and lattice windows to act as a mitigator of excessive light and heat. As in Assyria and Persia, the flat-terraced roofs, used for sitting, sleeping and even exercise, predominate<sup>1</sup> here also. An astute observer like Bernier rightly reprimands the Europeans who overlooked this basic fact in the construction of their homes and complained of the architectural inferiority of Indian buildings as compared to those in the West. "What is proper and proper at Paris, London or Amsterdam," he writes, "would be entirely out of place in a different climate like that of India. The comfort and convenience of the dweller was the main consideration while planning construction of buildings."<sup>3</sup>

### Mughal palaces

The dwelling of a king, a raja or a prince was the chief attraction in a capital or a city in which such royal residences were situated. Fortified by a wall and moat, these fortresses were usually situated on the bank of a river or a stream. Some of these were situated on rocky eminences "just turning into overhanging lakes or artificial pieces of water"<sup>4</sup> and of the most picturesque combination.<sup>5</sup> These palaces consisted of two parts—inner and outer. The inner part contained the apartments of the queens, and the princesses, the private court of the king, the retiring-rooms, etc., while the outer part contained

*Diwan-i-Am*, *Diwan-i-Khas*, the arsenal, the store-house, etc. The palaces also contained pleasure-gardens, flower-gardens, groves, tanks, etc. in their proper places. The Mughal gardens copied from earlier gardens of Turkestan and Persia were invariably square or rectangular in shape with fountains and pavilions. Running water or canal was another feature of the Mughal gardens. The principal pavilion, such as the exquisite black marble *baradari* in the Shalimar garden of Kashmir or the octagonal building which once adorned the great tank of the ruined garden at Bijbehara, served as retreats from the glare of the midday sun.<sup>6</sup> There were also pavilions for witnessing animal-fights and for musical entertainments. Stables for horses, elephants, cows, etc. were also provided. Akbar's<sup>7</sup> palaces at Agra,<sup>8</sup> Allahabad<sup>9</sup> and Lahore may serve as good examples of the Mughal conception of royal palaces.<sup>10</sup> Percy Brown describes these palace fortresses at some length in his *Indian Architecture*. All these palaces had gardens with running water which flowed in channels into reservoirs of stone, jasper and marble. In all the rooms and halls, there were fountains and reservoirs of proportionate size.

Akbar's palace-fortress at Agra was the first to be constructed,<sup>11</sup> as is evident from its irregular grouping of halls and rooms and the want of symmetry in its lay-out. It is said to have contained "500 edifices of red sandstone in the fine style of Bengal and Gujarat." These were, however, subsequently destroyed by Shahjahan to make room for his more sumptuous marble pavilions.<sup>12</sup> From the vestiges of the two palace buildings, Akbari Mahal and Jahangiri Mahal, it appears that they were designed on the usual scheme of a range of double storeyed chambers surrounding a central courtyard.<sup>13</sup> Similar in conception, though smaller in area, was the Lahore Fort. This rectangular-shaped palace-fortress was divided longitudinally into two approximately equal spaces, that "towards the south being reserved for the official and service buildings while in the space at the rear were grouped the royal palaces." In between these two parts were a row of buildings acting as a screen.<sup>14</sup> Akbar's palace-fortress at Allahabad is mostly in ruins and there now remains only a *baradari* known as the *zenana*.<sup>15</sup> The chief features of the buildings at Fatchpur Sikri—"the planning, the wide-projecting drepstones and their

supporting brackets, for shade and protection from rain, the double roofs domed or vaulted for coldness"—are all dictated by considerations of comfort and convenience rather than imitation of other buildings.<sup>16</sup> The palace enclosure in the fort of Delhi<sup>17</sup> is symmetrical in its arrangements. It has four parts—a large central quadrangle containing the *Diwan-i-Am* or Hall of Public Audience on each side of which are ornamental gardens; and there is a range of marble palaces on one side facing the gardens, the other side commanding an open view of the river. As originally planned, there were to be six marble structures—on the outer side the pavilions were closed except for screened windows and other similar openings. Included in this range of buildings were a hall of private audience and a luxurious *hammam* or bathing establishment and between each structure there were wide courts and terraces. The finest of all these buildings were the Hall of Audience and the Rang Mahal.<sup>18</sup> The spacious gardens were often elaborate and comprehensive compositions and were a special feature of the Mughal architectural projects.<sup>19</sup>

### Hindu palaces

Most of the Hindu palaces built during the 16th and 17th centuries, particularly in the capitals of the native states in Rajputana, viz., Bikaner, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Orchha, Datia, Udaipur and the city of Amber (Jaipur), do not follow any particular style,<sup>20</sup> ancient or modern, and appear to be, as Fergusson notes, "a vast congeries of public and private apartments grouped as a whole more for convenience than effect."<sup>21</sup> But their situation on "rocky eminences, jutting into or overhanging lakes or artificial pieces of water" makes them "one of the most picturesque combinations."<sup>22</sup> These palaces, as already stated, are unsystematic in their compositions and are built more for convenience and comfort than for architectural considerations. As is but natural, the Mughal style (Indo-Persian) dominates the planning, composition and construction of these royal residences which were usually situated "at the mouth of a rocky gorge, and around a petty lake, the whole securely reposing under the protection of a range of fortresses on the ridge above. In the central position is the great pile forming the open courtyard or *darbar* square,

which is approached by means of a fine staircase and through an imposing gateway. Two halls within the square were prominent, the *Diwan-i-Am* or Hall of Audience and the entrance to the palace itself both of which in style are apparently improvisations on the existing architecture of the Mughals. Almost facing this *Diwan-i-Am* but depicting an entirely different aspect of the building is the facade and entrance hall to the palace apartments. Beyond this *darbar* square and leading out of it is one range of structures consisting of minor palaces, *zenana* apartments, courtyards, terraces and gardens, covering a large space and forming the minor precincts of the palace."<sup>23</sup> From this an idea may be formed of the general character of the palaces. Jahangir Mandir built at Orchha (Bundelkhand) by Raja Bir Singh Deo (1605-26) is a fine example of an Indian medieval castle. It is "picturesque, artistic, and romantic" besides being a superb example of the builder's art. A doorway on the southern facade leads into a ground floor hall. Passing through it, one finds oneself in a square courtyard of 125 feet side around which the entire interior structures are arranged. The interior quadrangle has no large structures; it is a wide open space containing a raised platform with a fountain playing in the centre."<sup>24</sup> It is in reality a simple composition. This great palace was obviously so designed that every part fulfilled its function and expressed purpose; its rooms were devised for seclusion, its terraces for the cool air, its corridors for convenience, each compartment, court, hall and passage had its specific use and was introduced into the scheme in accord with the requirements of its inmates.<sup>25</sup> In order to maintain communication with the various parts, each group of rooms were approached by a continuous hanging balcony. The palace at Gwalior is an interesting example of a Hindu palace. The dimensions of the palace are 300 ft. by 160 ft. On each side it is 200 ft. high and has two underground storeys.<sup>26</sup> Raja Bir Singh's palace at Datia, built in the year 1620, is slightly smaller than the Jahangir Mandir. It consists of a congeries of large subterranean halls, descending to several storeys. A complete suite of underground apartments or *tahkhana* for retreat during summer, of almost the same size as the structure above, was another feature of this palace. In the middle of the courtyard was the five-storeyed building

containing the royal dwelling apartments. The central edifice was connected to the "ranges of rooms by which it was surrounded, by means of four flying corridors or bridges double storeys carried across from the middle of each side."<sup>27</sup>

Prominent among medieval Indian palaces is that of Amber, once the seat of the rulers of Jaipur state. Its construction was started by Man Singh in 1592 and was completed by Jai Singh (1625-66). In the richness of its architecture this palace rivals Akbar's contemporary palace at Fatehpur Sikri. With its drawing and dining rooms, its kitchens, lavatories,<sup>28</sup> arrangement for sprinkling water on *khas tattis* by means of iron pipes having holes, etc., it gives a complete idea about a medieval Indian palace.<sup>29</sup>

### Palaces in the south

The south is not so rich in secular architecture. There are, however, four palaces in Madras built in the 16th and 17th centuries. Lotus Mahal, a garden palace, was built in Vijayanagar about 1575 A.D. It was followed by the erection of a palace in the fort at Chandragiri by the Vijayanagar rulers. The lower portion of this "rectangular palace is of a solid construction of stone masonry but the upper storeys are of brick strengthened with a certain amount of wood work; finally the surfaces were coated with stucco." There is a palace at Madurai built about 1645 A.D. The last group of palaces built about 1700 A.D. at Tanjore are much of the same style.<sup>30</sup>

### Mansions and villas of the upper classes

No uniform pattern was followed by the nobility in the construction of their houses in various parts of the country. The climatic conditions in a particular region, the availability of materials and the taste of the builder were the main factors in the design of a building. A house, however, in a country like India which is in the tropics was considered to be beautiful, Bernier remarks, "if it be conspicuous and if the situation be airy and exposed on all sides to the winds, especially to the northern winds."<sup>31</sup> The traveller observed that "many of their houses are built high and flat on the top from where in the cool season of day they take in fresh air. They have *chimneys* to their houses for they never use fire but to d

their meat. In their upper rooms they have doors and windows to let in the air but use no glass." An ideal house situated in the middle of a flower-garden would have courtyards, trees, basins of water, "small *objets de eau* in the hall or at entrance and handsome sub-terraneous apartments" which were provided with large fans. It served as a retiring-place during the summer noons.<sup>32</sup> Mandelslo's remark that "there is no house almost but hath its garden and tanques" shows the general popularity of the gardens.<sup>33</sup> The outer appearance of such a house might not be so impressive but inside there were all sorts of luxuries including tanks, private recesses for their women, etc. During summer these tanks were filled with water "drawn by oxen from wells." The water thus drawn was sometimes raised through the device of a wheel in such great quantity that it rose like a fountain when passed through a lead pipe.<sup>34</sup> The roofs were generally kept flat, so that the dweller might be able to enjoy the evening breeze. *Khas tattis* were also used during summer.

#### Division of two wings

These houses had large enclosures in the middle of which were situated the dwelling apartments, so that no one could approach directly the place where the women resided. The house had to be so constructed as to provide for two wings known as the *mardana* and *zenana*. A drawing-room where the noble received visitors and held court, a *khwabgah* or the bed-room, a kitchen, lavatories, etc., besides a courtyard,<sup>35</sup> were the necessary requisites.<sup>36</sup> Quite frequently, however, there were three to four *diwans* or large rooms raised high from the ground for fresh air to come in. The climatic conditions also necessitated a terrace where the family could sleep during nights.<sup>37</sup> The roofs of the buildings were kept flat for this purpose. A *barsati* or a spacious room was also built on the terrace where "the bed-stand is easily moved in case of rain, when the cold wind is felt at the break of day or when it is found necessary to guard against the light but penetrating dews" which, as Bernier notices, "frequently cause a numbness in the limbs and induce a species of paralysis."<sup>38</sup> The European travellers are full of praise for the houses of the rich which were "noble and elegant,"<sup>39</sup> spacious and pleasant.<sup>40</sup> Nieuhoff, however, observed

that their houses were not as high as similar buildings in Europe. The traveller noted that at the entrance of their houses, whether of the rich or the poor, were courtyards surrounded with high walls which were meant for the reception of the visitors.<sup>41</sup> Hindus, unlike Muslims, paid more attention to the outer look of their houses which were built of "stone and cemented with lime up to the first storey above which carpenter's work was to be seen with sculptures in relief in teak wood painted in various colours."<sup>42</sup>

### Merchant's houses at Surat

The houses of the merchants at Surat were fair and stately. Built of brick and lime, they were several storeys high. Stone being unavailable, timber imported from Daman was extensively used in their windows with *chicks* or lattices carved in wood. Externally they were purposely kept plain and simple to avoid the avaricious eyes of the Mughal Governor, but "were ornamented without displaying gold-embroidered tapestry." Mandelslo saw beautiful gardens and fair country houses in the suburbs of Surat.<sup>43</sup>

### Houses in Kashmir

These houses were seldom three or four storeys high<sup>44</sup> except in Kashmir, where, as *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* points out, most of these houses were at least five storeys high,<sup>45</sup> each storey containing apartments, halls or galleries or towers.<sup>46</sup> *Khulasat*, which puts the number of storeys in Kashmir at four, elaborates: "On the ground floor are kept animals and furniture, the second storey is the residence, the third and fourth are used for keeping articles."<sup>47</sup> Due to frequent earthquakes, houses in Kashmir were built of wood.<sup>48</sup> Pelsaert praises the "elegant look" of these houses which were ventilated with handsome and artistic open work instead of windows or glass.<sup>49</sup> On the roof of these houses, which were all made of wood, were planted *tulips* which presented a nice spectacle to look at in spring.<sup>50</sup> Pelsaert mentions that people grew grass or onions on the flat-roofed houses so that during the rainy season the "green roofs and groves, usually situated on the river side, make the city most beautiful on a distant view."<sup>51</sup> *Khulasat* also mentions floating houses in Kashmir.<sup>52</sup> Most of these houses possessed a garden

and sometimes even a small lake which at a distance joined the main canal where they enjoyed boating.<sup>53</sup>

### Mansions at Agra

Bernier saw at Agra the mansions of nobles interspersed with "luxuriant and green foliage in the midst of which the lofty stone-houses of the Banias or Hindu merchants have their appearance of old castles buried in forests."<sup>54</sup> Birbal's house at Fatehpur Sikri represents a "superb example of a residential building remarkable for its balance and harmony of design." It was a two-storeyed building raised on a plinth, the first floor was reached by two staircases. The ground floor had a suite of four rooms, each with a flat ceiling. Tavernier was greatly impressed by the houses of the nobles at Agra which he regarded as "the biggest city in India."<sup>55</sup> Nicholas Withington, however, regarded Agra as inferior to Lahore.<sup>56</sup>

Monseratte had nothing but admiration for the "well-built, lofty and handsomely decorated residences of the rich men at Delhi."<sup>57</sup> He particularly refers to the abundance of green trees.<sup>58</sup> *Khulasat* praises the "heart-ravishing" houses of the nobles at Delhi which had "perfect grace and happiness."<sup>59</sup>

### Mansions at Delhi and Lahore

There were lofty and spacious houses of the upper classes at Delhi, Lahore and Masulipatam. They had balconies and folding windows. Some of them had a tank in the middle of the courtyard which served as a retreat during summer.<sup>60</sup> These mansions, to quote *Khulasat*, reposed in the midst of "extensive gardens or clusters of trees."<sup>61</sup>

In Malabar, the houses of the rich, as Bartolomeo noted, were built of teak wood and consisted of not more than two storeys. In front of the lower storey, there was a small hall which served as a verandah or parlour. The upper storey was used for study, as a bedroom or for any other private work.<sup>62</sup> He saw several houses which were 400 years old and had not suffered any decay.

Verandah was a speciality of houses in Sind. Bocarro found 50,000 well-built houses in the "Kingdom of Cande" (Sind).<sup>63</sup> In Cambay the houses of the well-to-do were built of brick and stone and had flat roofs with "ceilings of tiles and cisterns."<sup>64</sup>



The houses of the rich in Gujarat were built of brick and lime on broad stone-foundations. Most of the houses had secret passages for escape in an emergency.<sup>65</sup> Some among the wealthy people, having built vaults, covered their buildings with lime mortar.

The houses of the rich in Dacca were no doubt built of wood or bamboos but most of them contained a tank. The tanks were considered essential, as the Muslim women observed purdah and would not like to go out for bathing. Unlike the present-day houses, however, they were flat-roofed and were inconvenient during the rainy season.<sup>65\*</sup>

#### Houses of the middle class

The houses of traders, merchants and petty *unras* were modest in their appearance as compared to those of the nobles. They lacked elaborate carvings, embellishments and beautiful gardens. Some of them were built of brick, burnt tiles and lime,<sup>66</sup> others of clay and straw.<sup>67</sup> In the villages, the well-to-do zamindars had several huts grouped together. The thatched rooms were supported by long, handsome pillars of cane. The walls were covered with a fine white lime.<sup>68</sup> These houses were very airy and commodious. Some of them were two storeyed and had beautiful terrace roofs.<sup>69</sup> In Agra most of the houses were two or three storeys high during Jahangir's time.<sup>70</sup> The majority of the houses in Varanasi, according to Tavernier, were built of brick and cut-stone.<sup>71</sup> The houses of the merchants in Malabar were two-storeyed and could be had at 20 crowns while those of the commoners cost two crowns.<sup>72</sup>

#### Arrangement of the houses

If the building happened to be in the main street, the lower storey of it was fronted with awnings and similar expedients to form traders' booths. But in the quieter alleys of such towns as Bikaner, Jodhpur, Lashkar (Gwalior) and Ajmer, such dwellings, two or three storeys high, would have a flat roof enclosed with a balustrade or perforated parapet, thus converting it into a terrace for use in the hot weather. Outside on the ground floor was a platform approached by steps. It would serve as a *chabutara* or sitting-out place for the use of the master to

conduct his business and entertain his friends. There was usually only one strong wooden doorway in the centre for protection. The middle storey might consist of a wide and continuous balcony supported on clusters of carved brackets. The windows were screened with stone-lattices. It enabled the occupant to see without being seen. Another feature was the eave or *chhajja*, above the cornice of each storey, with its great width, its cast and shadow which helped to keep the entire building cool during summer.<sup>73</sup> In Gujarat and Kathiawar, the same general description held good except that in those parts wood took the place of stone. In Kashmir the face of the houses wore picturesque compositions of wood in which arcaded balconies were a special feature.

In Ahmedabad the houses were generally built of brick and mortar and the roofs tiled. Ferishta wrote about its 30 *mohallas*, each *mohalla* having a wall surrounding it. He thought it to be the "handsomest city in Hindostan."<sup>74</sup>

### Huts of the poor

No traveller has a good word to say about the houses of the lower classes. These have generally been described as thatched huts, without any cellars and windows. Each hut had only one apartment. The addition of a second hut and a granary was considered as making a house a comfortable abode.<sup>75</sup> These huts had only a single opening for air, light and entrance. It was impossible to enter without stooping.<sup>76</sup> The floors of the houses were of pounded earth spread over with cowdung.<sup>77</sup> To keep them clean, pasting with cowdung was done afresh almost every day.<sup>78</sup>

### The mud huts

Such huts could be easily built in a few days; the mud walls, six or seven feet high, did not take much time to harden due to the intensity of the heat. Orme was misinformed when he wrote that these houses, constructed with bamboos and pack thread, and covered only with the mat of palm-tree leaves, would last for six months.<sup>79</sup> In fact they lasted much longer as Abul Fazl mentions.<sup>80</sup> These thatched cottages were, however, subject to frequent fires. Bernier refers to a fire in Delhi which burnt down 60,000 huts.<sup>81</sup> The traveller particularly

observed that the houses and cities were crowded ; large families stayed in a single hut.<sup>82</sup> In their huts they had only a mat to sleep upon and a pit or hole in the ground to beat their rice in. They had only a pot or two for cooking purposes.<sup>83</sup>

### **Building materials of the poor**

Bamboo canes, branches of trees, ropes and grasses of diverse kinds constituted the main building materials of the houses of the poor. Abul Fazl found the houses in Orissa made of reeds,<sup>84</sup> while bamboo was used in the construction of houses at Ajmer.<sup>85</sup> The houses at the latter place were tent-shaped.<sup>86</sup> Manucci's remark regarding the houses at Patna (Bihar) that they were thatched with leaves of palm-tree finds corroboration from Tavernier.<sup>87</sup> During his travels from Varanasi to Patna, Ralph Fitch found that most of the houses of the poor were of "earth covered with straw."<sup>88</sup> Due to the frequent changes in the course of the Jhelum River, the people in Multan (West Punjab) had their houses built of wood and grass.<sup>89</sup> Tavernier was struck by the "miserable huts" of the poor at Dacca which were made of "bamboo with mud spread over them."<sup>90</sup> The bamboo houses in Bengal used to last for a very long time.<sup>91</sup> The houses in Khandesh looked a little better. They were made of earth like the houses in other parts of the country but were covered with varnished tiles. Many of them were surrounded by trees which made them look beautiful.<sup>92</sup> Most of the houses in Kashmir were made of wood. However, many people lived in large boats as in Bassein.<sup>93</sup> Tavernier, Thevenot and Careri have referred to the houses of the poor at Surat. Like those in Malabar, they were made of bamboo canes covered with branches and leaves of palm-trees, the interstices being filled up with cowdung mixed with clay to "prevent those outside from seeing between the reeds what goes on inside."<sup>94</sup> The houses of the lower classes in Sind were made externally of poles covered with a mixture of straw and mud.<sup>95</sup> The houses of the working classes in the south were "nothing but huts covered with *Cajan* leaves." These were so low that a person could not stand upright in them. The houses in Vijayanagara were arranged according to occupation in long streets with many open spaces. They were usually of straw and mud but the wood of coconut was used

wherever it was available, particularly in coastal areas.<sup>96</sup> The houses of the poor in Cochin were, according to a 17th-century traveller, nothing but hovels. They could not be called even a booth.<sup>97</sup>

### Love for trees

The foreigners praise the Indians for their love for trees. They were planted all around their villages and towns. In fact, from a distance their villages looked like forests or groves.<sup>98</sup> Every Hindu would have a *tulsi* plant in his house. It was tended reverently and worshipped.<sup>99</sup>

### Use of cowdung

Pietro Della Valle noticed in A.D. 1623 a universal custom which escaped the attention of the previous travellers. "When we arriv'd at this Town (which he calls Tumbre) we found the pavements of the cottages were varnish'd over with cowdung mix'd with water ; a custom of the Gentiles in the places they are wont to eat, as I have formerly observ'd. I took it for a superstitious Rite of Religion ; but I since better understand that it is us'd only for elegancy and ornament, because not using, or not knowing how to make, such strong and lasting pavements like ours, theres, being made sleightly of Earth and so easily spyl'd, therefore when they are minded to have them plain, smooth and firm, they smear the same over with cowdung temper'd with water in case it be not liquid (for if it be there needs no water), and plaining it either with their hands, or some other instrument, and so make it smooth, bright, strong and of a fine green colour, the cows whose dung they use never eating anything but Grass ; and it hath one convenience, that this polishing is presently made, is soon dry and endures walking, or anything else, to be done upon it ; and the Houses wherein we lodg'd we found were preparing thus at our coming, and presently dry enough for our use. Indeed this is pretty Curiosity, and I intend to cause tryal to be made of it in Italy, and the rather because they say for certain that the Houses whose pavements are thus stercorated, are good against the Plague, which is no despicable advantage. Onely it hath this evil, that its handsomeness and politeness lasteth not, but requires frequent renovation, and he that would have

it handsome must renew it every eight, or ten days ; yet, being a thing easier to be done and of so little charge, it matters not for a little trouble which every poor person knows how to dispatch. The Portugals use it in their Houses at Goa and other places of India ; and in brief, 'tis certain that it is no superstitious custom, but onely for neatness and ornament ; and therefore 'tis no wonder that the Gentiles use it often and perhaps every day, in places where they eat, which above all the rest are to be very neat."<sup>100</sup>

## FURNITURE

### General

Furniture, in the modern sense of the word, has never been very popular in India. It does not imply, however, that its various forms were not known to our ancestors. The references to *pitha*<sup>101</sup> (stool), *protha*<sup>102</sup> (a broad couch over which women lay down to sleep), and *talpa*<sup>103</sup> (a bed or a couch) in Vedic texts and to *khatta* (bedstead), and *pithamasana* (chair or stool) in the *Amarakosa*,<sup>104</sup> besides many others, may very well serve as examples. Even a cane-bottomed seat or *vetrasana* finds a reference in Hemachandra.<sup>105</sup> There is no denying the fact, however, that these articles, including the *khatta*, were of course never in common use and the Mughals did not bring about any radical change in this long-established custom.<sup>106</sup>

### Chairs—superfluous and uncomfortable

The Indian mode of sitting<sup>107</sup> did not necessitate chairs which were rightly regarded in Mughal days as superfluous and uncomfortable.<sup>108</sup> Leaving aside even that, there was no place for them in the royal darbar as all, including the highest dignitaries of the state, ambassadors from foreign lands and even the princes of royal blood, except the privileged few, had to keep standing.<sup>109</sup> Fryer's<sup>110</sup> and Pelsaert's<sup>111</sup> observations regarding the complete absence of chairs are rather exaggerated. The Governor of Surat, we are told, at once sent for chairs when Roe called on him.<sup>112</sup> The use of elbow-chairs by the rich has been stressed upon by another seventeenth-century traveller.<sup>113</sup> Abdur Razzaq, the Persian ambassador, who visited Vijayanagar a little prior to our period, also testifies to the

use of chairs and settees by courtesans of Vijayanagar.<sup>114</sup> Several contemporary paintings depict Mughal kings<sup>115</sup> and even their nobles<sup>116</sup> sitting on chairs having arms and high backs. The seats, sometimes cushioned, were always wider than those of today. The legs of the chairs were sometimes carved out and the feet were connected by wooden planks.<sup>117</sup> Some of them got their chairs covered with ivory.<sup>118</sup> Couches, usually made of precious wood<sup>119</sup> or even metals,<sup>120</sup> were well cushioned with costly carpets and rugs. Monserrate writes : "Akbar generally sits with cross-legs upon a couch covered with scarlet rugs."<sup>121</sup> Sometimes made of wood, they had diamond-set handles with garlands of flowers on them.<sup>122</sup>

#### Furniture for sitting

Stools were used in those days. Usually covered with leather or cloth, they could be interwoven with cane also.<sup>123</sup> *Pidis* also find reference in old Bengali literature.<sup>124</sup> Those made of suitable wood such as *kanthal* (yellow wood) and *mandar* (the coral trees) were articles of luxury.<sup>125</sup> *Mundas* of reed have also been mentioned by M. Ashraf in his *Life and Condition of the People of Hindustan*.<sup>126</sup>

Tables were not much in demand during Mughal days.<sup>127</sup> Hamilton hints at it : "They lack wooden dishes and tables but not so well as in China."<sup>128</sup> But tables were in use among the merchants on the West Coast.<sup>129</sup> Linschoten refers to the use of plantain leaves for making table-cloths and napkins.<sup>130</sup> Sind leather was also employed to cover tables.<sup>131</sup>

#### Royal thrones

Thrones have always served as the usual seat for the Indian kings.<sup>132</sup> Besides the imperial thrones in the darbar, it was customary to have one provided in every room of the palace. A nicely designed golden foot-stool was invariably placed beneath the throne.<sup>133</sup> Mughal emperors spent large sums of money on design and construction of their golden thrones,<sup>134</sup> which were used like chairs. Abdul Aziz has described some of these thrones in a chronological order in his monograph "Thrones, Chairs and Seats used by the Indian Mughals."<sup>135</sup> Whenever the king visited any of his subjects, some minor throne usually moved ahead of him.<sup>136</sup> Marble platforms were usually

constructed in the courtyards and in the lawns of the royal palaces for seating purposes.<sup>137</sup>

### Bedsteads

*Khatta*<sup>138</sup> or bedstead, the most common article of furniture in those days, was used by the rich<sup>139</sup> and the poor alike. Foreign travellers rightly mention it as the only furniture available in the house of a poor man.<sup>141</sup> It was used as a couch to sit and recline upon during daytime and it served the purpose of a cot at night.<sup>142</sup> These bedsteads, woven with cords<sup>143</sup> or braids of cotton or silk<sup>144</sup> according to the owner's means, had their legs often painted or lacquered.<sup>145</sup> Gilt bedsteads have also been mentioned by Bernier.<sup>146</sup> The aristocracy was very particular about their bedsteads which were lavishly ornamented with gold, silver,<sup>147</sup> or even with jewels and diamonds.<sup>148</sup> A bedstead of ivory, inlaid with gold, has also been mentioned.<sup>149</sup> Lacquered bedsteads used to be imported into Goa<sup>150</sup> as noted by Pyrard. Light and easily portable beds were also used when going out on journeys. Bernier refers to such a bed made of very strong but light cane.<sup>151</sup>

Paes, a Dutch traveller, describes a swing cot, or rather exactly a cradle, that he saw in the royal palace at Vijayanagara thus: "On entering the corridor was a cot suspended in the air by silver chains; the cot had feet made of bars of iron so well made that they could not be better and the cross-arms of the cot were covered with gold."<sup>152</sup> Ovington admires the Indian-made cradles as they were "much easier and more convenient than ours." Usually they were suspended in the air by means of strings tied at each end and fastened to a beam above. They would swing very softly.<sup>153</sup> Quilts of cotton or silk were spread over the floor of the swing.<sup>154</sup>

### Bedding

The bedding of the poor was very scanty and consisted of a sheet or two.<sup>155</sup> The bed-cloths<sup>156</sup> of the rich were more elaborate and comprised mattresses, pillows and coverlets, which were sometimes made of silk<sup>157</sup> and embroidered;<sup>158</sup> cotton was used for ordinary beds. A coverlet was usually doubled to serve as a mattress while on journeys.<sup>159</sup> Narwar (Gwalior) was famous for quilted coverlets which were usually embroidered.<sup>160</sup>

mattresses were much in demand in those days.<sup>161</sup> Rich Hindus preferred to use beautiful mats called *sitalpatis*<sup>162</sup> which were perhaps more exquisitely made than now. They had the reputation of being exceedingly cool when slept upon.<sup>163</sup> A costly blanket called *Indra Kambal*<sup>164</sup> and pillows filled with mustard seeds were regarded as articles of luxury.<sup>165</sup> Manrique also refers to the use of Sind leather for beds.<sup>166</sup> Quilts were also used in winter, particularly in northern India.<sup>167</sup> Manrique admires those of Sind for their excellent back stitches.<sup>168</sup> Fine quilts of Cambay were exported to Europe.<sup>169</sup>

### Mosquito curtains

Mosquito curtains were also freely employed, particularly in Bengal, by the well-to-do who got them prepared of silk cloth.<sup>170</sup> *Chandua* curtains, their special form, find reference in Mymensingh ballads.<sup>171</sup> The use of the word चतुष्की both for a mosquito curtain and a fishing net in a verse in the *Sabdaratna-samanvaya* composed by King Shahaji of Tanjore (A.D. 1683-1711) testifies to the use of nets in mosquito curtains.<sup>172</sup> Achyuta Raya, king of Vijayanagar, had a mosquito curtain with a frame of silver.<sup>173</sup>

Mats usually made of straw<sup>174</sup> or the leaves of palm or coconut trees<sup>175</sup> were used by the poor to sit and lie upon.<sup>176</sup> These finely woven mats were spread over a place smeared over with cowdung.<sup>177</sup> Muslims of Bengal, according to Mukundram, preferred to use reed mats.<sup>178</sup>

### Carpets

*Diwan khana*s or drawing-rooms of the nobles were decorated with costly carpets<sup>179</sup> usually imported from Persia.<sup>180</sup> Carpets of Turkish leather were also used.<sup>181</sup> Akbar caused great improvements to be made in the carpet-weaving industry as a result of which "wonderful varieties and charming textures" were produced.<sup>182</sup> Terry considered Indian carpets to be as good as those made in Turkey or Persia.<sup>183</sup> Lahore and Kashmir<sup>184</sup> carpets were particularly famous. Pyrard admires the pile carpets of Bengal which they "weave with great skill."<sup>185</sup> But the carpets of Goshkan (Joshagan, a town in Iraqi-i-Ajam), Khuzistan, Kirman and Sabzwar still retained their popularity and were imported in large numbers.<sup>186</sup>



### Rugs and spreads

*Galims* (or rugs) and *takya namdas* (or woollen coverlets) were in great demand among the nobles who had them imported from Kabul and Persia.<sup>187</sup> India-made *qalins* were equally handsome and durable; they were surprisingly cheap. Srinagar and Masulipatam<sup>189</sup> were particularly famous for their fabrics, fine closely woven and beautifully designed rugs. The Indian Hunting Rug of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts is one of the best carpets now extant in the world. It was manufactured in A.D. 1640.<sup>191</sup>

*Jajams*, *shatrinjis* and *baluchis* were sometimes spread over the mattresses.<sup>192</sup> In the drawing-room of the Governor of Dacca, Fryer saw the floor spread over with a soft bed over which was laid "a fine white Calicut, the pedestals were massed with silver."<sup>193</sup> Big cylindrical cushions were a part of the furniture and no drawing-room could be considered complete without them.<sup>194</sup> Whether on the throne, in the chair or even on the carpeted floor, cushions were there to support one's back and even sides if necessary.<sup>195</sup> Della Valle describes the drawing-room in the provincial palace at Ikkeri. The king, he writes, sat upon a little quilt having at his back two great cushions of fine white silk. Curtains were also used to decorate the rooms.<sup>196</sup> Some of them carried pictures of men, houses and scenery.<sup>197</sup> Gujarati<sup>198</sup> and Banarsi curtains were particularly liked. The latter were embroidered with silk.<sup>199</sup> Sind had a reputation for leather hangings.<sup>200</sup> The king and the nobles used to import costly tapestry hangings from abroad.<sup>201</sup> Petis Mandu gives a fairly accurate description of the *khas tatts* which were used in summer,<sup>202</sup> and helped to keep the room cool.

### Drawing-room of a noble

Bernier's description of the *diwan khana* of a noble is quite informative.<sup>203</sup> The gilt ceiling of the drawing-room as well as the walls was beautifully painted.<sup>204</sup> The floor,<sup>205</sup> covered with a carpet usually four inches in thickness, had spread over it a white cloth in summer and a silk carpet in winter. Rugs, too, were used to enhance its beauty.<sup>206</sup> One or two mattresses with "fine coverings quilted in the form of flowers and ornamented with delicate silk embroidery interspersed with gold

and silver" were also laid at some conspicuous corner where distinguished visitors were accommodated. There was a big pillow of brocade at each of these mattresses while many more of velvet or flowered satin were placed round the room. Beautiful porcelain vases and flower-pots decorated the several well-cut and well-proportioned niches at the sides of the room. Chinaware was also used for decorative purposes in Mughal interiors.<sup>207</sup> Jahangir also refers to the use of Chinese porcelain in the *Tuzuk*. Sir Thomas Roe, who was conscious of its growing popularity,<sup>208</sup> relates how a Dutch ambassador brought a nice present of chinaware "sanders, parrots and cloves" for the Emperor.<sup>209</sup> Barbosa writes about the Muhammadan merchants of Reynel<sup>210</sup> that in their "well-kept and well-furnished houses they have many shelves all round the front room which are filled with fair and rich porcelain of new styles."<sup>211</sup>

### Fans

Fans have been in use in India from time immemorial.<sup>212</sup> During its long history the fan has been made of palm-leaf, ivory, silver filigree, as well as of vellum, silk, tulle, lace, kid, chicken-skin, paper and of a score of other materials.<sup>213</sup> The king of Vijayanagar sent for a fan called *khatta* for the use of Abdur Razzaq, the traveller who visited the court in 1443 A.D.<sup>214</sup> During Mughal days, however, the common people used fans made from the leaves of palm and coconut trees.<sup>215</sup> But the rich had broad fans, made of stiff leather,<sup>216</sup> or even of ivory.<sup>217</sup> Ovington refers to the use of *murchals* or fans of peacock feathers and leather which were four to five feet long. *Padmavat* refers to the use of fly-whisks (*chowries*) by the well-to-do.<sup>218</sup> The Emperors and the nobles must have used diamond-studded fans fitted with golden handles. We find a reference to a similar fan called *Lakeer Biyani* in old Bengali literature.<sup>219</sup> It has been described thus : "It was nicely made, of round shape resembling the moon. Its handle was made of gold. Even the wind god was afraid of it and bowed to its will at its very sight. There were ornamentation of gold on the fan and golden lotuses all around it.... The thread that was used in the fan was golden. The fan was a valuable one and was full of pictorial decorations."<sup>220</sup>

### Swinging fans

There is also a reference to the use of swinging fans in the houses of the rich. Usually made of linen, they could be closed by means of a string from outside.<sup>221</sup>

### Royal furnishings on tours

Tents, marquees and wooden partitions may also be included in the royal furnishings which usually accompanied king's tours.<sup>222</sup> Eleven types of such camps, viz., *bargah* with two poles, *chubin rawati* raised on ten pillars having one or two doors, *do-ashiyana manzil* or house of two storeys raised on 18 pillars, *zaminbos*, a tent made of various forms, the *mandal* consisting of nine awnings on four pillars, the *mandal* consisting of five awnings joined together, *ath-khamba*, consisting of seven awnings, *khargah*,<sup>223</sup> a folding tent made in various forms, the *shamiana*<sup>224</sup> with awnings made of various sizes, and *parda* made of carpeting are described in detail in the *Ma'atim* of Abul Fazl.<sup>225</sup> *Gulalbar*, which may also be added, was the grandest of them all, never occupying an area of less than one hundred square yards.<sup>226</sup> *Gulalbar* was a wooden screen with its parts joined together with leather straps, so that it could be folded when necessary.<sup>227</sup> *Qalandari*, a covering made of cloth or any other lighter material, was also used to provide protection from the rain and the sun.<sup>228</sup> Even the poor used umbrellas sometimes made of leaves.<sup>229</sup> Manrique evaluated the total cost<sup>230</sup> of the rugs, carpets, wall hangings and tents in the Imperial palace, pavilion, etc. to be Rs. 9,925,449.

### Cabinets and chests

Cabinets, chests, boxes, etc. were also to be found in the houses of the merchants on the West Coast.<sup>231</sup> Cabinets manufactured at Surat were said to be the best in the world. Tattah had a reputation of making fine cabinets, usually made with ivory.<sup>232</sup> Paes, a traveller, saw a room in the palace at Vijayanagar decorated with ivory carvings of lotus, roses and other flowers.<sup>234</sup>

### Utensils

Strictly speaking, utensils do not form part of the furniture. But European travellers of our period include them

list.<sup>235</sup> The poor among Muhammadans could only afford a few earthen wares,<sup>236</sup> while Hindus had them made of brass or copper.<sup>237</sup> A "few flat dishes of copper or brass, drinking-vessel with a spout, a pot-kettle in which they boil their rice, a *vikacea*, or round lamp of iron or brass fastened to a chain by which it can be suspended in the middle of the hut" and a wooden mortar were, according to an 18th-century traveller, their only vessels.<sup>238</sup> Golden and silver vessels were used by the kings and the nobles.<sup>239</sup> Bengal was reputed for black and red pottery which was made, according to Pyrard, like the finest and most delicate *terresigillee*.<sup>240</sup> Manucci also refers to baskets made from branches of palm or coconut trees.<sup>241</sup>

## NOTES

1. Barrister Fletcher and Barrister F. Fletcher, *A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method*, 4th edition, London, pp. 440-41.
2. Bernier, p. 240.
3. Fryer (old edition), p. 199. For a painting, 'Masons building a wall' refer to Plate LIX, Fig. 1, Indian Museum Collection, No. 201.
4. Fatehpur Sikri had a large artificial lake on the north-west to mitigate the dust and stifling heat of an Indian summer. E.B. Havell, *Indian Architecture*, London, 1913, p. 164.
5. Fergusson, James, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, Vol. II, p. 170.
6. See C.M. Villiers Stuart, *Gardens of the Great Mughals*.
7. Nothing of importance now remains of Babar's buildings. Havell, *op. cit.*, p. 153.
8. This great stronghold takes the form of an irregular semi-circle. One of its most remarkable features is the massive enclosure walls which consist of a solid sandstone rampart just under 70 feet in height and nearly one and a half miles in circumference. Its dimensions allow a number of commodious rooms to form the interior, providing quarters for a considerable guard. Within the area enclosed by the walls of this fortress there were built, according to the *Ain*, more than 500 edifices of red standstone, in the fine

- style of Bengal and Gujarat. Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture*, The Islamic Period, Bombay, p. 100.
9. It is now however partly dismantled. There now remain only a *baradari* or pavilion known as *zenana*.
  10. Akbar's buildings strictly speaking are Rajput rather than Mughal. Havell, *op. cit.*, p. 163. Akbar's palace at Agra and buildings at Fatehpur Sikri are essentially a new development of the same Buddhist-Hindu craft tradition which had created the architecture of the preceding Mussalman dynasty. *Ibid.*
  11. It was completed in eight years (1565 A.D.—1573 A.D.) at a cost of 35 lakhs of rupees. A. Goswami and S. Saraswati, *Glimpses of Mughal Architecture*, p. 23.
  12. Jahangiri Mahal was perhaps the residence of the emperor apparent. Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 100.
  13. Goswami and Saraswati, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
  14. *Ibid.*
  15. *Ibid.*
  16. Havell, *op. cit.*, p. 171.
  17. "Neither Jahangir nor Shahjahan had Akbar's genius for constructive statesmanship and so far the personal influence went they only helped Indian craftsmen to clothe more costly materials the creative ideas of the preceding century. Sumptuous decoration and lavish expenditure of material rather than intellectuality in design were the characteristics of the later period of Mogul architecture." Havell, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-200.
  18. Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, p. III.
  19. *Ibid.*, p. 118.
  20. Fergusson, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 170.
  21. *Ibid.*
  22. *Ibid.*
  23. Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 127-30.
  24. *Ibid.*, p. 130.
  25. *Ibid.*
  26. Fergusson, *op. cit.*, I, p. 175.
  27. Strange to say, writes Percy Brown, it was never occupied. No royal family even lived within its precincts. Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 131.
  28. These were similar to the one built at Agra Fort where the

sewage and sullage dropped directly below into a drain carrying the refuse in the Yamuna.

29. Man Mandir built by Maharaja Man Singh (1486-1516) a little earlier on the heights of Gwalior Fort seemed to have served "more a retreat for the royal ladies than a permanent residential palace." Percy Brown describes it thus : "The main body of the building is in two storeys but on the eastern face against the retaining wall of the fort there are two additional ranges of underground apartments for use in the hot weather. The rooms of the uppermost floor have balconies overlooking the open courts below and above there are roof terraces in which to take the air, while around the whole are narrow screened passages for communications. The whole structure is unscientific." Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 129. See also Fergusson, *op. cit.*, I, p. 177.
30. Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 132.
31. Bernier, p. 247. In 1677 A.D. Aurangzeb put a ban on the construction of pucca houses by *mansabdars* above 400 without special permission. Sarkar, *Maasir-i-Alamgiri*, (Urdu) p. 100.
32. *Ibid.*, p., 248.
33. Mandelslo, p. 54 ; Edward Terry, *Early Travels*, p. 301.
34. Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 67.
35. Nieuhoff's *Voyages*, p. 221.
36. Mandelslo, p. 64.
37. As Pelsaert says, "Their houses are noble and pleasant except a flat roof on which to enjoy the evening air." *Jahangir's India*, p. 66.
38. Bernier, p. 247.
39. *Jahangir's India*, p. 67.
40. Mandelslo, p. 64.
41. Nieuhoff's *Voyages*, p. 221.
42. "Travels of Pedro Godinho" (1683), *Calcutta Review*, Vol. XCIII (1891), p. 67.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 67 ; Fryer (old), p. 92 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 225 ; Edward Terry in *Early Travels*, pp. 301-2 ; Ovington, p. 216 ; Thevenot (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 22 ; Careri (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 163 ; Hamilton, I, pp. 161-

- 62 ; Thomas Herbert's *Voyages*, p. 31 ; Tavernier (Ball), I, p. 6 ; Mandelslo, p. 12.
44. Nieuhoff's *Voyages*, p. 221.
45. *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, trans. E. Denison Ross, p. 4. *Khulasat* writes four or more storeys. *Khulasat*, extra translated in *India of Aurangzib* (Sarkar), p. 1. Thevenot says three storeys high. Thevenot, p. 82.
46. *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, translation E. Denison Ross, p. 425.
47. *Khulasat, India of Aurangzib* (Sarkar), p. 112.
48. *Ain*, (Sarkar) III, p. 352.
49. *Jahangir's India*, p. 34.
50. *Khulasat, op. cit.* (Sarkar), p. 112.
51. *Jahangir's India*, p. 34.
52. *Khulasat, op. cit.* (Sarkar), p. 70.
53. Thevenot, p. 82.
54. Bernier, p. 285.
55. Tavernier, p. 76, I, p. 86.
56. Nicholas Withington in *Early Travels*, p. 244.
57. Monserrate, pp. 97-98.
58. *Ibid.*
59. *Khulasat*, extracts translated in Sarkar's *India of Aurangzib*, p. 5.
60. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, pp. 174-75 ; Tavernier (Ball), I, p. 141 ; For Lahore see *Early Travels*, p. 2. "It was said to be one of the largest cities of the whole universe for it is xv miles in compass and exceeds Constantinople itself in greatness." *Ibid.*
61. *Khulasat, op. cit.* (Sarkar), p. xxxviii.
62. Bartolomeo, *op. cit.*, pp. 155, 158.
63. Bocarro's 'Description of Sind,' translated and annotated by F. Archilles Meersman, *Journal of Sind History Society*, August, 1940, Vol. IV, p. 201. The title of the work is '*Livro das plantas de fortalezas e cidades para o Estado de India Oriental*' composed in 1602 A.D.
64. Della Valle, I, p. 67 ; Pieter Van Dan Broecke at Suva, J.I.H., Vol. X, 1931, p. 246.
65. *Khulasat, op. cit.* (Sarkar), p. 61 ; also see *Ain*, (Sarkar), p. 246.
- 65.\* Karim, Abdul, *A Social History of the Muslims in Bengal*

- Dacca, 1959, p. 190.
66. Saletore, *Social Life in the Vijayanagar Empire*, Vol. II, p. 293.
  67. *Ain*, Jarrett (1891), Vol. II, p. 122.
  68. Bernier, p. 246.
  69. Rennell's *Memoir of a Map of Hindostan*, p. 58.
  70. *Tuzuk*, Rogers, I, p. 7 ; Latif, *Agra, Historical and Descriptive*, p. 24.
  71. Tavernier, p. 96.
  72. *History of Dutch East Indies*, p. 314 ; also see A. Sarada Raju, *Economic Conditions in Madras Presidency (1800-1850)*, University of Madras, 1941, p. 279.
  73. Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 133.
  74. See Thornton, *Gazetteer of India*, Vol. I, p. 28.
  75. Linschoten, I, p. 261. For houses in Narwar (Gwalior), Tavernier (Ball), I, p. 51 ; *Roe's Embassy*, p. 90 ; Masulipatam, Tavernier (Ball), I, p. 141 ; Patna, *Purchas' India*, pp. 6, 10, and Hamilton, II, p. 22. For a thatched hut of *Sadhus* late 17th century, refer to Plate LX, Catalogue of the Indian Collection in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Part VI, *Mughal Painting* by Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.
  76. Nieuhoff's *Voyages*, p. 221 ; Tavernier (Ball), I, p. 100.
  77. *Storia*, III, p. 41 ; also see Orme's *Fragments*, pp. 407-8.
  78. *India in the 17th Century*, p. 451.
  79. Orme's *Fragments*, p. 472.
  80. *Ain* (Jarrett), II (1891), p. 122 ; Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 67.
  81. Bernier, p. 246.
  82. Bocarro's account in *Journal of Sind Hist., Soc.*, Vol. IV, August 1940.
  83. Linschoten, *Purchas' India*, X, p. 262.
  84. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 138.
  85. *Ibid.*, p. 273.
  86. *Ibid.*
  87. Tavernier (Ball), I, p. 100.
  88. Ralph Fitch, *Early Travels*, pp. 23-24.
  89. *Khulasat* (Sarkar), *India of Aurangzib*, p. 79.
  90. Tavernier, *op. cit.*, I, p. 86.
  91. *Khulasat* (Sarkar), *op. cit.*, p. 41.



92. Thevenot, p. 100.
93. Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 34 ; Ralph Fitch, *East India Travels*, p. 30.
94. For Surat see Sen, *Careri*, p. 163 ; Thevenot, p. 2. Tavernier (Ball), I, p. 6 ; for Malabar refer to Nieuhoof, *Voyages*, p. 221 ; Bartolomeo, p. 155 ; Padre Godin (1663), *Calcutta Review*, Vol. XCIII (1891), p. 67.
95. Bocarro's Description of Sind, *Journal of Sind Hist.* S. Vol. IV, August, 1940.
96. Salestore, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 295.
97. *India in the 17th Century*, p. 215.
98. Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 246.
99. Fryer (old), p. 199.
100. Salestore, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 296-97.
101. *Vaj Sam*, XXX, 21. Also refer to *The Industrial Arts of India* by C.M. Birdwood, p. 203. For reference to chairs and tables during the reign of Chandra Gupta Maurya (322 B.C.), V.A. Smith's *Early History of India*, p. 128.
102. *Rig-Veda*, V, VII, 55, 8.
103. *Ibid*, VII, 55, 8, A. V., V, 17, 12 ; XII, 2, 31, 41.
104. *Some Aspects of Indian Civilization*, pp. 18-19. Also see T.N. Mukharji, *Art Manufacturers of India*, p. 232 ; F. Majumdar (ed.), *History of Bengal*, Vol. I, p. 615.
105. *Ibid*.
106. The houses of the merchants on the West Coast, however, were well furnished. Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, pp. 161-62, 273.
107. Cross-legged or knees bent inwards. The latter position was usually adopted by Muhammadans in the Mu'allaq darbar. See Chester Beatty, *op. cit.*, Vols. I-III and *Storia*, III, p. 41.
108. Particularly when sitting with their legs dangling down. Thomas's *Customs and Manners*, p. 75. Also see Ainslie (Sarkar), p. 324 and Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 67.
109. Studies in Indian Paintings, Plate No. 39, depicting a European ambassador in the Court of Shahjahan. Also see Aziz, *Thrones, Chairs and Seats used by the Indian Mughals*, p. 182 ; *Storia*, I, pp. 88 (middle) and 89. The note

exceptions were, Abdur-r-Rahim (vide *Tuzuk*, 416; *Badshahname*, I, 194), Prince Khurram (*Tuzuk*, 195, R & B, I, 395) and Dara Shukoh (*Badshahnama*, III, 108a). This unique privilege was not in recognition of one's position as an ambassador or royal prince, but was meant as a royal tribute to his personality and descent. Abdul Aziz, *op cit.*, p. 182.

110. Fryer (old), p. 200.
111. Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 67.
112. *Roe's Embassy*, p. 65.
113. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 456.
114. Mahalingham, *Administration and Social Life under Vijayanagar*, p. 268.
115. A little prior to our period we see Timur sitting on an armed chair (Plate No. 44, p. 102 of *Studies in Indian Painting*); for other two pictures depicting Timur in a similar chair refer to No. 44 and the other unnumbered both in possession of Delhi Museum of Archaeology. For a painting of Akbar's time depicting a woman with a tall *Chaghtai* cap sitting on a chair refer to Plate III. *Catalogue of Indian Collections*, Part VI, Mughal Paintings. Plate XLVII depicts a princess seated on a chair with water and lotuses in the foreground. In Stochoukine (*La Peinture Indienne*, Plate XXXI) we see Jahangir sitting on a jewelled chair. Aurangzeb is depicted sitting on a chair in *Storia*, II, Frontispiece. Plate LXII and LVI (*Catalogue of Indian Paintings*, Part VI, Mughal Paintings, A.D. 1712) depict Jahandar Shah on a beautiful chair.
116. For Sadullah Khan, the Prime Minister of Shahjahan, sitting on a chair administering justice see Stochoukine, *La Peinture Indienne*, Pl. LV and for Fakhir Khan, another noble, on a chair see Pl. XXXII (Binyon, *Court Painters*). Abdul Aziz, *op. cit.*, p. 228.
117. Refer to the footnotes 115 and 116 above.
118. For illustration of two chairs belonging to 17th and 18th centuries refer to figure 137 of *The Arts and Crafts of India and Ceylon* by Coomaraswamy.
119. Several contemporary paintings depict these couches; see for example Plate 58, Vol. III, Chester Beatty; Also refer to *Maasir*, I, p. 64.

120. Sometimes of gold. *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 27.
121. Monserrate's *Commentary*, p. 199.
122. *Ibid.*
123. Della Valle, pp. 245-46. Also see Capt. Cope, *A New History of the East Indies*, p. 37.
124. *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 300.
125. *Ibid.*
126. Ashraf, *op. cit.*, p. 274.
127. The writer has come across at least one beautiful contemporary painting (Chester Beatty, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, Pl. 58) which depicts a nice little table with a single leg in the centre. Nuniz also refers to the use of a three-legged stool by Achyuta Raja of Vijayanagar. His dinner was served on this table made of gold. Mahalingham, *Administration and Social Life under Vijayanagar*, pp. 282-83.
128. Hamilton, I, p. 126.
129. Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, pp. 161-62 ; Mandelslo, p. 27.
130. Moreland *op. cit.*, p. 273.
131. Manrique, II, p. 239.
132. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *The Arts and Crafts of India and Ceylon*, p. 169 ; Mukharji, *Art Manufactures of India*, pp. 231-32. Thrones are mentioned in *Rig-Veda*, the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. Birdwood names them *rajapatra* and *rajasana* (*The Industrial Arts of India*, p. 204).
133. Refer to Plate No 31, Chester Beatty, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, fol. 201 for example. Also refer to *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 369.
134. Refer to Abdul Aziz, *Thrones, Chairs and Seats of Indian Mughals*, pp. 183-87.
135. For Babar's thrones Plate XXXIV (b) of Loan Exhibition of Antiquities, Delhi, 1911 ; Plate XIV of Percy Brown's *Indian Paintings under the Mughals* ; For Humayun's throne *Tarikh-i-Khandan-i-Timuriya* (Bankipur Library) facing page 158. For Akbar's Plate facing p. 164 of *Humayun-nama* ; Plate XIV of Stochoukine's *La Peinture Indienne*, Plate XLVII (c) of Loan Exhibition, Delhi ; Chester Beatty, Vol. II, Frontispiece, and Plates 6, 16, 17, 31, 65. For Jahangiri thrones, Percy Brown, Plate XLIV, Pl. LVI, No. 2 ; Binyon, *Asiatic Arts in the British Museum*, R & B,

- I, 168, R & B, II, 80. For Shahjahan, Plate XXV of *Indian Painting under the Mughals*, Plate 10 (c) Stanley Clarke, *Indian Drawings*; for Dara Shukoh, Pl. XXI, *Storia*, Vol. II; for Aurangzeb's throne No. H. 169 (Delhi Museum of Archaeology), pp. 185-87 of Abdul Aziz's *Thrones, Chairs and Seats*. For three of the Mughal Emperors seated on richly decorated thrones refer to Chester Beatty, *op. cit.*, Plate, 65, Vol. III.
136. Abdul Aziz's *Thrones, Chairs and Seats*, p. 192.
137. *Badshahnama*, I, ii, p. 238.
138. So called on account of its being made of eight pieces of wood. *Some Aspects of Indian Civilization*, p. 120. It was also known as *Palankas*. *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 271.
139. Bernier, p. 353; Della Valle, pp. 245-46; Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, pp. 161-62; *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 271.
140. Mandelslo, p. 27; Hamilton, p. 126; *Jahangir's India*, p. 61; De Laet (Moreland, p. 273); Linschoten (quoted in Moreland, *op. cit.*, p. 273); Bartolomeo, p. 156.
141. *Ibid.*
142. *Storia*, III, p. 41. The *charpais* of the Waziris of Bannu possess a carved board at the head and at the right to be used as a back-rest when desired. *Catalogue of Delhi Art Exhibition*, p. 119.
143. Careri, (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 168.
144. Ashraf, *Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan*, p. 273.
145. Bernier p. 359; Coomaraswamy, *Arts and Crafts of India and Ceylon*, p. 169.
146. Bernier, p. 359.
147. Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 67; *Travels of Nicolo Conti*, pp. 21-22; *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 298.
148. *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 298. Paes and Nuniz give a vivid description of the beds and cots used in the palace at Vijayanagar. While describing a bed-room the former writes: "It has a four-sided porch made of cane-work over which is a work of rubies and diamonds and all other kinds of precious stones and pearls and above all the porch are two pendants of gold, all the precious stone-work is in

the heart-shape and interweaved between one and another is a twist of thick seed-pearl work, on the dome are pendants of the same. In this chamber was a bed which had feet similar to the porch, the cross bars covered with gold and there was on it a mattress of black satin ; it had all around it a railing of pearls a span wide, on it two cushions and no other covering." Nuniz writes about Achyuta Raya : "The bedsteads in which his wives sleep are covered and adorned with silver plates. Every wife has her bed in which she sleeps and that of the king is plated and lined and has all its legs of gold, its mattress of silk and its round bolster worked round the ends with large seed-pearls. It has four pillows of the same pattern for the feet and has no other sheet than a silk cloth on top." Mahalingham, *Administration and Social Life under Vijayanagar*, pp. 289-90.

149. *Ibid.*, p. 290.
150. Mentioned in Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, pp. 161-62.
151. Bernier, p. 353.
152. Quoted in Saletore, *op. cit.*, II, p. 290. Also see *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 280.
153. Ovington, *A Voyage to Surat in the Year 1689*, ed. by H.S. Rawlinson. O.U.P. 1929, pp. 197-98.
154. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 280.
155. Mandelslo, p. 27 ; De Laet, p. 89 ; Pelsaert, p. 61 ; Hamilton, p. 126 ; also see Plate XVI, *Indian Drawings*.
156. The bedding of the well-to-do, according to old Bengali Literature (*Storia*, III, pp. 39-40), comprised rough cloths, cotton *pachhras*, still used in Tipperah side, a bed-sheet and winter cloth, Khua fabrics, Bhutani blankets, silk fabrics, velvets, and red blankets. *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 299.
157. *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 298 ; Ashraf, p. 273 ; Bernier, p. 353. Tattah coverlets were quite well-known. *A New History of East India*, p. 225.
158. Refer to Plate XIV of *Catalogue of Indian Collections*, Part VI, Mughal Paintings.
159. Bernier, p. 353.
160. Tavernier, I, p. 51.

161. Manrique, II, p. 239. *Catalogue of Delhi Art Exhibition*, p. 448.
162. *Khulasat* refers to it. Vide J.N. Sarkar, *India of Aurangzib*, p. 41; *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 271. *Sitalpati* mats are made at Mymensingh, Backergunj in Dacca and at Punniah in Bhagalpur. George C.M. Birdwood, *The Industrial Arts of India* (ed. 1880), p. 298. *Ganga-jali-patti* was another kind of mat. *Ibid.* p. 300.
163. *Catalogue of Delhi Arts Exhibition*, p. 448.
164. *Aspects of Bengali Society*, pp. 271-72.
165. *Ibid.*, p. 299.
166. Manrique, II, p. 248.
167. Careri (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 168. His assertion that instead of quilts Indians used blankets may be true for a part of the country. Also see Ovington, pp. 313-14.
168. Manrique, II, p. 239. Also see *Storia*, III, p. 41.
169. Cope Capt., *A New History of East Indies*, p. 225.
170. *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 299. P.K. Gode in his paper 'The Mosquito-Net in Egypt (B.C. 500) and the Mosquito-Curtain in India (Between B.C. 500 and A.D. 1800)' has proved the use of mosquito curtains in India from A.D. 1000. (*Bhartiya Vidya Journal*. Vol. VIII, No. 12, December, 1947, pp. 275-88). Also see Hobson-Jobson, p. 590, edition 1903.
171. *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 299.
172. "चतुष्की मशकाहय्या चतुष्की यष्टिकान्तरे ।  
चतुष्को मत्स्यहार्या स्यात् पुष्करिण्यन्तरेऽपिच ॥"  
(*Sabdaratnasamanvaya*, G.O. Series, Baroda, 1932, p. 15.)
173. Mahalingham, *Administration and Social Life under Vijayanagar*, p. 289.
174. Samuel Purchas' *India*, p. 188; Linschoten, I, p. 256; *Catalogue of Delhi Art Exhibition*, p. 440. For a contemporary painting depicting a mat refer to Album of Jahangir, Frontispiece, Vol. VIII, Chester Beatty. For mats, see Birdwood, *Industrial Arts of India*, pp. 298-300. Mat-manufacturing centres are at Midnapur (Bengal), Palghat (Malabar). Birdwood, *op. cit.*, pp. 298-300.
175. *Storia*, III, p. 187.
176. Samuel Purchas' *India*, pp. 96, 188. *Travels of Nicolo*

- Conti (Travels in India in the 15th Century)*, pp. 21-22 ; *Storia*, III, p. 42 ; Mandelslo, p. 85.
177. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, pp. 392, 456 ; *Storia*, III, p. 41.
178. *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 93.
179. *Early Travels*, p. 311 ; *Jahangir's India*, p. 67 ; Careri (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 248.
180. De Laet, p. 91 ; *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 296.
181. Mandelslo (p. 28) saw such a carpet also at the residence of the Governor of Ahmedabad.
182. The carpet in possession of Vincent Robinson and shown in the Indian Section of the South Kensington Museum was made in the 16th century or early 17th century. It contains 3,500,000 knots in its entire surface or 400 knots to the square inch. Its pattern was so complicated that a change of the needle was required for every knot. T.N. Mukharji, *Art Manufacturers of India*, Calcutta, 1888 ; Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 9. Also see *Journal of Indian Arts and Industry*, Vol. XI, April 1905. *Art Islamica*, Vol. VII, pp. 93-94 (for a Persian garden-carpet in Jaipur Museum), and Vol. VIII, pp. 121-122. "The Art of Carpet-Making and a Survey of Persian Art" by Von Kurt Erdmann ; "On the Origin of the Persian Carpet Pattern" by Ernst Cohn-Wiener, *Islamic Culture*, Vol. XI, No. 4, Oct. 1937. H. Hendley, *Asian Carpets, 16th-17th century designs from Jaipur palaces*, London, 1905 ; *Handbook of the Jeypore Courts* by H. Hendley, Calcutta, 1886, and Martin's *A History of Oriental Carpets before 1800*, Vienna, 1908.
183. *Early Travels* by Foster, p. 308.
184. Plate No. 57 of *Indian Arts at Delhi* (1903) shows two wonderful carpets believed to have been made in Kashmir about three hundred years ago. The carpets are preserved in the Asar Mahal, an old palace in Bijapur. An old manuscript *Haft Kursi-i-Padshahan* gives the date of their arrival from Kashmir in the year A.H. 1067 (1657 A.D.) *Indian Arts at Delhi*, p. 432. Some of the carpets used to cost a hundred rupees a yard. *Maasir*, I, p. 715. For a Bijapuri *Jainamaz* of the same period refer to *Ibid.*, p. 433. *Ain*, I (Bloch) 1939, p. 57. Agra, Fatehpur and Lahore

were the main carpet-weaving centres. Banaras too was a well-known centre. John Marshall writes : "They have excellent carpets (rugs) of 100 rupees each." *John Marshall in India*, p. 170. For present-day centres see Birdwood, *Industrial Arts of India*, pp. 294-98.

185. Pyrard, I, p. 328.
186. *Ain*, I (1939), p. 57. Pyrard writes : "From Ormus to Goa came carpets the most exquisite and the best made in the world." Pyrard, II, pp. 239-40.
187. *Ain*, I (1939), p. 57. For Persian rugs, see Churchill Mary, *The Oriental Rug Book*, pp. 172-205, 102-160.
188. *Ain*, I (1939), p. 57. Abul Fazl relates that a single *galim* 20 gaz 7 *tassujes* long and 6 gaz 11½ *tassujes* broad would cost Rs. 1810, though its estimated price by the experts would not be less than Rs. 2715. For Indian rugs see : Churchill Mary, *The Oriental Rug Book*, pp. 228, 240 ; and Hawley A. Walter, *Oriental Rugs*, pp. 253-76.
189. *Catalogue of Delhi Art Exhibition*, p. 440.
190. Amritsar, Agra, Lahore and Multan were also rug manufacturing centres. Walter, *Oriental Rugs*, p. 256. The well-known carpet now in possession of the Girdler's Company of London, was manufactured at Lahore in 1634. *Ibid*.
191. Eight feet three inches long and five feet three inches wide, it contains about three hundred and sixty knots to the square inch. It depicts a hunting scene and its predominant colour is red. For details refer to Walter, *Oriental Rugs*, pp. 335-36.
192. *Ain*, I (1939), p. 57.
193. Fryer (old), p. 131.
194. *Ibid*. ; Bernier, p. 248 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, pp. 456 and 280 ; *The Arts and Crafts of India and Ceylon* by Ananda Coomaraswamy, London, 1913, p. 169 ; Ovington, pp. 313-14.
195. Bernier, p. 248 ; Fryer (old), p. 200. Mughal nobles have been depicted propped up by large cushions in innumerable contemporary paintings for which refer to Chester Beatty's Vols. I-III ; Percy Brown's Plates XV, XXVII of *Catalogue of Indian Collections*, Part VI, Mughal Paintings ; *Studies in*



- Indian Paintings* ; Plate No. 39 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 456.
196. Della Valle, II, pp. 250-52 quoted in Saleatore's *Social and Political Life in the Vijayanagar Empire* (1346-1646 A.D.), Vol. II, p. 292.
  197. There is a painting on stuff in possession of Bedford College for Women, London, which was probably used as a temporary decoration in the King's Camp while on expedition. It dates back to the Mughal period, A.D. 1600-1620. For details refer to 'A New Mughal Painting on Stuff' by Basil Gray in *Ars Islamica*, Vol. IV, pp. 459-60. *Futuh-at-i-Firuz Shahi*, vide f. 10-11 quoted in Ashraf, *op. cit.*, p. 273. For curtains refer to the various darbar paintings of the period.
  198. Gul, 18, 20-23 quoted in Ashraf, *op. cit.*, 273. The house of a noble called Khalifa where Gulbadan was received at Koli (Aligarh) by the Mughal Emperor was decorated with Gujarati curtains. *Ibid.*
  199. William Finch in Purchas, IV, p. 66.
  200. Manrique, II, p. 239.
  201. *East India Company Records*, Vol. IV, p. 286. Sometimes it would cost 18 shillings per stitch. *Ibid.*
  202. Petermundy, II, p. 191 ; Bernier, p. 247 ; *Maasir*, I, p. 602.
  203. Bernier, pp. 247-48.
  204. Or plastered with fine white lime. *Early Travels*, p. 311. Also refer to "The Annual Relation of Father Fernao Guerreiro," *J.P.H.S.*, Vol. VII, pp. 58-59.
  205. Usually paved with stone or else made with lime sand. *Early Travels*, p. 311.
  206. *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 297.
  207. Abdul Aziz, *The Imperial Treasury of the Great Mughals*, J.I.H., Vol. XIV, 1935, p. 67.
  208. *Roe's Embassy*, pp. 445, 459.
  209. *Ibid.*, p. 68.
  210. Rander near Surat.
  211. Barbosa, trans. Dames, I, pp. 147-48.
  212. *Some Aspects of Indian Civilization*, pp. 125-26. "The daughter of king Nila," a famous Sanskrit poem tells us, "was the first who fanned the sacred fire with a decorated palm-leaf." Its objects are to relieve "the effects of heat,

- sweating, thirst, fainting and excess of fatigue." *Susruta Samhita*, IV, xx, iv, 82.
213. *Some Aspects of Indian Civilization*, pp. 125-26. Sometimes they were made of mica. *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 290.
  214. Major, R.H., *India in the 15th Century*, p. 31. According to Nuniz, the greatest honour which the Raja of Vijayanagar could confer on a noble consisted of two fans made of the white tails of certain cows, and ornamented with gold and precious stones. Mahalingham, *Administration and Social Life under Vijayanagar*, p. 277.
  215. Orme's *Fragments*, p. 471 ; *Storia* III, p. 187. Also see Petermundy, II, p. 191.
  216. *Early Travels*, p. 313.
  217. An ivory fan probably of the 17th century is in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, and is referred to in the *Burlington Magazine*, LXXV (1949), 64, pl. I. C. *Ars Islamica*, Vol. IX, Parts 1-2, p. 94, f.n. 7.
  218. *Padmavat* (Hindi), p. 269. *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 171. These were usually made of the tail-hair of a wild ox, peacock-feathers or grass roots.
  219. *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 292. Other fans mentioned are *Danda Pakha*, *Aber Pakha*. *Ibid.*, p. 289.
  220. *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 292. For a painting depicting a big round fan of 12th century see "An Indian Prince," *Illustrated Weekly of India*, p. 35, July 20, 1952.
  221. Petermundy, II, p. 191. The early swinging fans consisted of "a large frame of wood covered with cloth or painted paper."
  222. For the encampment on journeys [see Ain 16 of *Ain-i-Akbari*, I (1939), pp. 47-49.
  223. Bernier (p. 359) writes as *Karguais*.
  224. Called *Chandoas* (canopies) in Bengal. *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 296.
  225. For details refer to *Ain*, I (1939), pp. 55-57. For illustrations see Plates X and XI, p. 54.
  226. *Ain*, I (1939), p. 47.
  227. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
  228. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
  229. Petermundy, II, p. 126.

230. Manrique, II, p. 248.
231. Mandelslo, p. 27 ; Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, pp. 161-62.
232. Capt. Cope, *A New History of East Indies*, p. 246.
233. *Ibid.*, p. 225. There are two ivory caskets in the Residenz Museum, Munich, and two ivory caskets and an ivory fan in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. The first dates from the second half of the 17th century vide *Burlington Magazine*, LXIX (1936), 275, Pl. 3. The second Vienna casket probably dates from the 17th century. *Burlington Magazine*, LXXV (1939), 64, Pl. 1A. An ivory casket in British Museum, early 17th century, South India, etc. *Ars Islamica*, Vol. IX, p. 94, f.n. 7.
234. A.K. Commaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art* (London, 1927), p. 123.
235. De Laet, p. 89 ; Pelsaert, p. 61 ; Bartolomeo, p. 156.
236. Pelsaert, p. 61 ; De Laet, p. 89.
237. Bartolomeo, pp. 156 and 159. Cups, spoons and dishes of the Malabaris were usually made of coconuts. *Travels in India in 15th Century*, p. 221. Also see Mandelslo, pp. 64 and 85.
238. *Ibid.* ; Mandelslo, p. 64.
239. De Laet, p. 91 ; Pelsaert, p. 67 ; *Storia*, II, p. 53 ; Mandelslo, p. 74.
240. Pyrard, I, p. 329.
241. *Storia*, III, p. 187.

## CHAPTER II

# Mode of Travelling and Conveyance

### MEANS OF TRANSPORT

#### General

Though travelling was recommended by the learned of the age as a source of profit and a means of success, it was not much indulged in during Mughal times. Except for certain great highways, the permanent bridges over even the smaller rivers were rare.<sup>1</sup> It was reported to the East India Company in 1666 by their agents in India that "there were no better roads or mending of highways, but the first carts that travail must cut them anew, with their wheels, that makes it very tedious and troublesome travelling in the first of the year."<sup>2</sup> There were few efforts by the Mughal emperors to improve the condition of the roads. Sher Shah Sur was, however, an exception.<sup>3</sup> It was not safe to travel without a proper escort, as the highways swarmed with robbers and thieves.<sup>4</sup> Along the way there was scarcity of provisions and goods for both men and cattle and officials made the conditions still worse by demanding illegal gratification. Ordinary people, merchants and travellers preferred to accompany a caravan which, to quote a contemporary, was "a great multitude of people, travelling together on the way with camels, horses, mules, asses, etc. on which they carry their merchandise from one place to another."<sup>5</sup> Thousands and thousands of people would join the king's entourage whenever he moved out. And as a writer says: "Akbar's court, even when quartered in a city, was a camp or his camp was a travelling city."<sup>6</sup>

### Means of transport

Modern technical devices being unknown, the means of transport in those days were confined to human carriers, beasts of burden, and wheeled traffic on land, boats on rivers, and small sailing ships in the coastal seas. It took months and sometimes even years to traverse long distances. India's transport, however, compared favourably with the contemporary world, and there is some truth in Tavernier's observation that the "manner of travelling in India is more commodious than anything that has been invented for ease in France or Italy."<sup>7</sup>

### Oxen

The ox was the conveyance of the poor in villages and even in towns. "They ascended the ox," remarks Ovington, "with equal ease as we do our horses."<sup>8</sup> Instead of saddles, however, they put on a soft cushion and, with the strings of the reins passing through the nostrils of the animal in their hands, "travelled longer and shorter journeys at a good, round, easy rate."<sup>9</sup> Terry and Thevenot both confirm that some of them would go "as a fast as a horse" and covered 20 miles a day.<sup>10</sup> The bullocks of Vijayanagar were known for their "commodious pace"<sup>11</sup> and people rode them with panels, girts and bridles.<sup>12</sup> It was the practice to shoe the oxen especially when they were to cover long distances.<sup>13</sup> They put a thick scarf around their necks and a collar of leather a little above, before they were yoked to the wagons.<sup>14</sup>

### Bullock-cart

Horses, ponies, mules and even donkeys were used for riding purposes. In sandy places like Rajasthan and Sind camels were employed to cover distances. The traditional *bail-gari* or the bullock-drawn cart was much more in use then. It carried passengers as well as luggage. Its structure and shape have not much changed during all these centuries. Drawn by two or even three oxen, it could cover 20 miles a day.<sup>15</sup> These carts were covered completely when ladies travelled.<sup>16</sup> Manrique travelled in a similar cart from Agra to Patna. They could be had on hire.<sup>17</sup>

### Chariots

Samuel Purchas saw in the country many fine carts

gilded and covered with silk and fine cloth.<sup>18</sup> In Vijayanagar, it appears, carts were not used on a large scale owing to the bad conditions of the roads.<sup>19</sup> Thevenot refers to the use of chariots which were flat and even, having a border four fingers broad with pillars all round. The number of the pillars depended upon the taste of the owner but normally it did not exceed eight. It had two wheels, each having eight spokes four or five fingers thick. Those who could afford it covered the wooden floor of the chariot with a nice carpet, and "thongs of leather were interwoven from pillar to pillar to keep one from falling out." Some of the rich had their chariots ornamented with ivory. They were covered like the rooms of a house, their windows adorned with gilded leather or silk hangings, their mattresses made of silk quilts. Cushions were also used. Even a beautiful canopy was used sometimes as a protection against the sun.<sup>20</sup>

White oxen<sup>21</sup> were in great demand and were used by the nobles to draw their carriages.<sup>22</sup> To make them look more beautiful and impressive, they would "deck the ends of their horns with sheaths of copper and even clothe them."<sup>23</sup> These oxen were well fed and looked like elephants.<sup>24</sup> Some of the ordinary oxen were also very strong and would cover 12-15 leagues a day. They could travel for about two months at this speed.<sup>25</sup> The hire of such a coach was a rupee per day.<sup>26</sup> Thevenot found these chariots very comfortable. The finest chariots were built at Tattah.<sup>27</sup> Akbar preferred to drive in a two-horse chariot "wherein he would sit cross-legged upon a couch covered with scarlet rugs."<sup>28</sup> Among the presents sent by the East India Company to Jahangir, there was an English coach which created some sensation at the court and was used as a model by local craftsmen.<sup>29</sup> Jahangir presented it to Nurjahan. Its English lining was taken off and the coach was covered with gold, velvet and decorations.<sup>30</sup>

Horses, mules, and ponies served as a quicker form of transport.<sup>31</sup> The poor rode donkeys, too.<sup>32</sup> In sandy parts like Rajasthan an Sind<sup>33</sup> and even in Multan and Gujarat<sup>33</sup> camels were used. The swiftest camels came from Ajmer.<sup>34</sup> The *jammaza* breed was considered to be the best. It was followed closely by *lok*.<sup>35</sup> These varieties surpassed even those imported from Iran and Turan.<sup>36</sup> The ordinary kind came from Jodhpur,<sup>3</sup> Nagor,

Bikanir, Jaisalmir, Bhatinda, Bhatnir and Gujarat. The *Ain* describes in detail the trappings. The poorer sort had the barest possible, a *mahar kathi*<sup>37</sup> (saddle), an *afsar* (head-stall), a *dum-afsar* (crupper), etc. The rich had *kuchi* (saddle-cloth), a *qatarchi*, a *sarbachhi* (a sort of quilt), a *tang* (a girth), a *sartang* (a head-strap), a *shehband*, (a loin-strap), a *jalajil* (a breast-rope adorned with shells or bells), a *garadaband* (a neck-strap), three *chadars* (or coverings) made of broadcloth or variegated canvas or wax-cloth. Besides these, there were jewels, trimmings, silk and various other articles to adorn.<sup>38</sup>

### Elephants

Elephants with beautiful *howdahs* were quite often used as a conveyance by kings and nobles.<sup>39</sup> Princesses would also move about on elephants. Bernier refers to Roshan Ara Begam's trips seated in a golden *howdah* on a Pegu elephant.<sup>40</sup> The best elephants came from Pannah.<sup>41</sup> Elephants were also found in the Suba of Agra, forests of Bayawan and Narwar, Suba of Allahabad, in the confines of Pannah, Ghora, Ratanpur, Nandanpur, Sirguja and Bastar, in the Suba of Malwa, in Hindiyah, Uchhod, Chanderi, Santwas, Bijagarh, Raisin, Hoshangabad, Garha, Haryagarh in Bihar, in Rohtas and Jharkhand, and in Bengal, Orissa and Gurgaon. It was perhaps during the reign of Shahjahan that white elephants from Pegu were first imported.<sup>42</sup> During Akbar's time there were 101 elephants in the royal stables reserved for the King's use. They were known as *khas* elephants. Whenever the King mounted an elephant, it was customary for him to grant to the *mahavat* a sum equal to his one month's wages.<sup>43</sup> Of the many articles prescribed by the *Ain* as the harness of the elephants, the important ones were *dharna*, a large chain of iron, gold or silver, *loh-langar*, a long chain which prevented the elephant from running, *gadela*, a cushion, a *chaurasi*, a number of bells attached to a piece of broadcloth tied before and behind with a string passing through it, *pitkachh*, two chains fastened over the elephant's sides for beauty, *qutas* (the tail of the Tibetan Yak), about sixty, more or less, attached to the tusk, the forehead, the throat and the neck for ornamentation, and the *tayya*, five iron plates, each a span long and four fingers broad, fastened to each other by rings. *Gaj-jhamp* was a

covering put as an ornament above the *pakhar*. It was made of three folds of canvas, put together and sewn, broad ribbons being attached to the outside. *Meghdambar*, an awning to shade the elephant-driver, was invented by Akbar. The *ranpiyal* was a fillet for the forehead made of brocade or similar stuffs, from the hem of which nice ribbons and *qutas* hung down. The *gateli* which consisted of four links joined together with three above them and two others over the latter was attached to the feet of the elephant. Its sound was very effective. *Pay-ranjan* consisted of several bells similarly arranged.<sup>44</sup>

### Mules

Mules were used particularly for travelling on an uneven ground. According to the *Ain*, it possessed the "strength of a horse and the patience of an ass and though it has not the intelligence of the former, it has not the stupidity of the latter." It never forgot the road on which it had once travelled. Akbar encouraged its breed. The best mules in the country came from Pakhali (a little town north of Rawalpindi) and its neighbourhood.<sup>45</sup> They were also imported from Iraq-i-Arab and Iraq-i-Ajam and cost about Rs. 1,000 per head. For the poor, a saddle and a rope or a chain sufficed as the equipment for riding a mule. The rich, however, had a large number of accessories which included a *palan* (pack-saddle), a *shaltang* (shawl-strap), *palastang* (blanket-strap), a horse-hair saddle, a *sardo* (common head-stall) a *magasran* (to drive away flies), a currycomb, a hair-glove, etc.<sup>46</sup>

### Horses

Horses were preferred to other beasts for their swiftness, impressive look and comfortable ride. Horses were also used for drawing carriages. Special attention was paid to their proper breed. Horses were imported from Iraq-i-Arab, Iraq-i-Ajam, Turkey, Turkestan, Badakhshan, Shirwan, Qirgluz, Tibet, Kashmir and other countries. Punjabi horses called *Sanjui* (or *Satuji*) resembled Iraqi horses. Horses of Pati Haibatpur, Bajwaral, Tihara (in the Suba of Agra), Mewar and Ajmer were much sought after. *Gut* horses of northern mountains and *tanghan* (or *taghan*) horses of Cooch-Bihar were known for their strength.<sup>47</sup> Kashmir horses were small, strong and capable



of covering difficult tracts. Bengalis rarely took to horse-riding.<sup>48</sup>

The trappings of horses included an *artak* or horse-quilt, a *yalposh* (or covering for the mane), a woollen towel, the saddle-cloth, a *magasran* (a horse-tail fan to drive away flies), a *nukhta* and *gayza* (the bit), etc.<sup>49</sup>

### Palanquins

The nobles and the wealthy, however, preferred to travel in palanquins which were very comfortable. Several European travellers have described in detail these conveyances which were in fact box-litters with a pole or two projecting before and behind and which were borne on the shoulders of four or six men.<sup>50</sup> But when the journey was long, there were relays of bearers to take over.<sup>51</sup> The palanquin-bearers belonged to a special caste of Hindus known as *Kahars*. These palanquins were covered all over with cloth. In case of rain, wax-cloth was placed all over the palanquin.<sup>52</sup> There were several types of this conveyance. *Doli* and *dola* were ordinary types of palanquins. The former was specially hired for women to cover short distances.<sup>53</sup> It is still customary to carry home the bride in a *doli* which is covered with a red cloth.<sup>54</sup> It was covered with a rich cloth known as *Pater Dola* in Bengal.<sup>55</sup> It was hung on a single pole projecting before and behind and was borne on the shoulders of three men on each side.

### Sukhpal

A palanquin was similar to a *doli* in shape excepting the size which was bigger.<sup>56</sup> In Bengal the rich used *sukhasan* or *sukhpal*, a crescent-shaped litter covered with a camlet or a scarlet cloth, the two sides of which had fastenings of various metals.<sup>57</sup> Abul Fazl calls *sukhasan* as a "boat of dry land."<sup>58</sup> It was conveniently adapted for sitting in, lying at full length or sleeping on during travel.<sup>59</sup>

### Chandol

*Chandol* was perhaps the most luxurious litter. It was closed and covered like the room of a house; the windows were adorned with gilded leather or silk hangings; the mattresses were made of silk. Sometimes they spread a tiger-skin on the floor.<sup>60</sup> Some decorated them with plates of carved silver while

others had them painted with flowers and other curiosities or set round with gilt balls.<sup>61</sup> There also hung in the palanquin a beautiful vessel containing drinking water.

This litter had two beautifully decorated poles projecting before and behind and was borne on the shoulders of 12 persons, three persons at each pole, i.e., six persons on each side.<sup>62</sup> The following is a poet's somewhat exaggerated description of a richly furnished palanquin of a noble, raja or a rich merchant : "The handles were made of gold and gems, besprinkled with liquid sandal. The roof of the palanquin was covered with a piece of thick silk. Precious gems decorated its skirts. Peacock feathers were used to adorn the palanquin. The silk tufts around it gave it a dazzling look. The merchant sat on the palanquin on one side and both on his right and on his left his attendants were fanning him with chowries."<sup>63</sup> According to the *Ain*, finely built carriages were called *bahals*.<sup>64</sup> There is a reference to the invention of an extraordinary carriage by Akbar. It was large enough to hold several apartments with a bath-room and was drawn by an elephant.<sup>65</sup>

### *Elephant-litters*

Sometimes elephants were employed to carry the litter which was suspended between two elephants. In summer the nobles had *khas tatties* (screens made of fragrant *khas* grass) fixed on all its four sides in order to have coolness inside. Petermundy refers to the growing of barley on the outer side of *tatties* to give it a pleasant look.<sup>66</sup> The noble Saif Khan's sister-in-law travelled in this type of litter to Agra to see the Taj Mahal.<sup>67</sup> There are frequent references to the use of camel and elephant litters. Manucci's *Storia Do Mogor* has a beautiful painting showing a litter fitted on the back of a camel by means of ropes. Petermundy describes *imari* (Petermundy, *ambarre*) or an elephant-litter as a "little coach made fast with strong *ghirsees* (*ghirnees* or pulleys) and ropes on the elephant's back standing on pack-saddles . . . at least a foot above his chine, which is a great height from the ground." These litters used by the king and the nobles were highly decorated and ornamented with all sorts of silk stuffs and jewellery. The curious reader may make a reference to Manucci's *Storia*<sup>68</sup> *Do*

*Mogor* for having an idea about the fine kind of *howdahs* used by the Mughal emperors.

### **Ships and boats**

Ships and boats were the principal means of water transport. There was a network of navigable rivers covering the provinces of Sind, Multan, Lahore, Kashmir, Delhi, Agra, Oudh, Allahabad, Bihar and Bengal. The Ganges, the Yamuna and the Indus were mainly employed near the coastal regions. There was a fleet of 300 to 400 sea-going ships plying between Cambay and Goa and another of 250 sailing from Goa to the South, besides numerous ships plying on the eastern coast of Bengal and Orissa.<sup>69</sup> Mandelslo's view that some of the largest ships could carry 1,000 persons seems to be exaggerated. Hamilton is more reasonable when he says that the largest of the ships could accommodate 200 persons.<sup>74</sup> Each ship had a number of cabins, which were hired out to passengers. A lock and a *kishti* (boat) were provided with each cabin. The lower part of a ship was constructed with triple planks, so that it could withstand the tempests. Some of the ships were built in compartments. If one part was damaged, the other parts enabled the ship to continue the journey.<sup>71</sup> Manucci is full of praise for the Indian ships which, according to the traveller, lasted much longer than those built in Europe.<sup>72</sup> Indians were quick to learn the British technique of building ships and quickly adopted it.<sup>70</sup> The ship-building centres in India were at Allahabad, Lahore, Multan, Kashmir and many places on the West Coast.<sup>74</sup>

Boats and rafts were used as a means of conveyance on the rivers. Akbar travelled in a boat from Agra to Allahabad. There is also a reference to Akbar's journey from Delhi to Agra by boat.<sup>75</sup> In Bengal, travelling was by boats, especially during the rainy season. They built different kinds of boats for purposes of war, carriage and swift sailing.<sup>76</sup> There were in Bengal alone about 4,200 big boats and 4,400 smaller ones, according to *Chahar Gulshan*.<sup>77</sup> Larger boats could carry even an elephant.<sup>78</sup> Boats on the Indus were provided with all amenities of life.<sup>79</sup>

The boats meant for the royalty were highly artistic. Abul Fazl refers to the "wonderfully fashioned boats with delightful

quarters and decks and gardens." The stern of the boats was made in the shape of animals so as to amuse and interest spectators.<sup>80</sup> To Humayun goes the credit of inventing *Jasr-i-Rawan* or a moveable bridge. It served both as a bridge and a boat. Several boats were joined together with hooks and iron chains. It was covered with wooden boards and was so firmly fixed with iron nails, etc. that passengers on foot and even riders could cross over it. Whenever the King planned a journey by river, the bridge was divided into several parts and steered on the water.<sup>81</sup> Petermundy refers to lighters and gabares at Agra of 300 to 500 tons which were used to transport great men and their families down the river to Allahabad, Patna and even Dacca.

In Vijayanagar brigantins or fustas were used for rowing. The people also used harigolus or coracles or round basket boats covered with hide. These basket-boats, made of cane, were covered with leather outside. They carried 15 to 20 persons. Even horses and oxen could cross in them. In the Tamil districts boats called *parisus*, made of wicker and leather, were used. In the Coromandel Coast there was in use a type of boat called *masala*. Besides rafts, hollowed trees and canoes were used.<sup>82</sup> The fishermen used *catamarans* (several pieces of wood fastened together in the form of rafts) to sweep the rivers and the seas.

### MODE OF TRAVELLING

Several European travellers have made a special mention of the manner of travelling in Mughal times. The custom required that all the able-bodied *umras* who were "not exempted by a peculiar office" should accompany the King when he moved out on his *takht-i-ra'van* or the throne which was carried on the shoulders of eight men. Sometimes, however, as for example, paying a visit to the mosque for prayers, he would dispense with this large retinue and only the *umras* on duty accompanied him.<sup>83</sup>

#### A noble's procession

It was a pleasure to see a noble going to attend the *darbar*. In his rich palanquin, he would sit cross-legged against a thick

cushion of brocade, chewing his betel, sweetening the breath and reddening his lips. Some of them had a hubble-bubble to keep themselves busy. On one side of the palanquin was a *pikdan* or spitoon of porcelain or silver; on the other side, there were two more servants to fan the lord, flap away the flies or brush off the dust with a peacock-fan. A few footmen marched in front to clear the way, and a soldier on a stately steed followed in the rear.<sup>84</sup>

If a long journey was intended, it was usual to send an advance party two days ahead to make necessary arrangements for stay at the first halting stage. The noble's procession was led by elephants and with flags, followed by the measurer of way and a contingent of horses. Drum-beaters on elephant's back came next. Trumpets were sounded off and on. Footmen carrying the noble's insignia or flags followed.<sup>85</sup> At night *mashalchis* with their lighted *mashals* (pots filled with oil in an iron hoop and emitting light with a lot of stinking fumes), marched ahead of the palanquin.<sup>86</sup> The noble was seated in a palanquin if the weather was bad, otherwise he rode on the back of a horse or an elephant. He was surrounded by servants some of whom were busy beating away the flies, others carried fans and cold water. The rear was made up of horsemen and foot-soldiers who acted as an escort. Their number varied from 200 to 500, according to the status of the noble.<sup>87</sup>

#### Armed escorts for travellers

It was equally necessary for merchants and travellers to engage an escort, particularly when they carried some merchandise. These people, armed with bows, arrows and muskets, were a deterrant to robbers.<sup>88</sup> European travellers lavish high praise on these escorts for their faithfulness to their masters and for their honest dealings. Their services could be had for Rs. 4 or Rs. 5 per month.<sup>89</sup> Sidi Ali Reis, who visited India during Humayun's reign, refers to a particular tribe called *Bats* who had taken it up as a regular profession.<sup>90</sup>

#### Princesses' mode of travelling

Bernier has left for us an eye-witness account of the procession of Roshanara Begam. He could not conceive of an "exhibition more grand and imposing." She sat in a beautiful

golden *meghdambar* on a Pegu elephant. It was followed by five or six other elephants, carrying other ladies of the royal household, in equally resplendent *meghdambars*. Surrounding the princess were the chief eunuchs beautifully dressed and finely mounted, each with a wand of his office in his hand. Her female bodyguards, Tartars and Kashmiris, richly attired, rode their handsome steeds. There were, besides, a large number of eunuchs on horseback and foot-soldiers with canes in their hands to clear the way, and whip away the intruders, if any. These princesses were followed by the principal lady of the court, mounted and attended to much in the same manner. Fifteen or sixteen ladies of high rank would thus pass by with "grandeur of appearance, equipage, and retinue more or less proportionate to their rank, pay and office."

Jahanara, however, preferred to travel in a palanquin which was covered with a rich cloth or net of gold. It was sometimes ornamented with precious stones and pieces of looking-glass. The eunuchs around it had peacock-feathers with handles of enamelled gold-work or adorned with precious stones. The palanquin moved very slowly and there were watermen in front who sprinkled water to lay the dust. Scents and perfumes were also kept by near the palanquin. The male attendants with sticks of gold or silver in their hands called out: "Out of the way, out of the way."<sup>91</sup>

No one could dare cross till the royal procession had passed, otherwise he was sure to be beaten back. Bernier once escaped with his life with great difficulty. It was indeed proverbial that three things were to be carefully avoided, the first being getting among the choice horses where kicking abounds, the second, intruding on the hunting-ground, and the third, a too near approach to the ladies of the seraglio.<sup>92</sup>

If any noble with his retinue happened to pass that way, he would dismount and stand aside with his hands crossed till the palanquin of the prince or princess came close; he would then respectfully bow and depart. It was customary in Mughal times for a person of junior rank to show the same civility to his superiors. Sometimes even the emperor and the princes alighted from their palanquins as a mark of respect to devout persons and waited deferentially till their carriage had passed by.<sup>93</sup> Sometimes the emperor or the prince would send

a gift of several pieces of betel in a gold brocade bag ornamented with precious stones as a mark of honour to the noble who waited.<sup>94</sup>

### Procession of an ambassador

An accredited ambassador's procession to the court of the Great Mughal to present his credentials and have an audience with the King was equally picturesque. The procession of William Norris<sup>95</sup> included State horses richly caparisoned, trumpeters, State palanquins, peons, lancers, players on hautboys, kettle-drums and bagpipes, musketeers and archers in due order. These were followed by a person of rank carrying a naked sword and liveried servants on horseback. The Sword of State was carried before the palanquin carrying the distinguished ambassador. As many as 30 peons followed, bearing silver lance and swords with scarlet scabbards. Close to this palanquin, on the left hand side, was carried a shield emblazoned with the King's arms. There were in attendance two chief peons carrying silver-gilt fanning feathers. Behind them were members of the embassy seated in coaches. Some gentlemen were on horseback.<sup>96</sup>

## POSTAL SYSTEM

### General

The Indian postal system during medieval times did not cater to the needs of the common man. There was no regular provision for the carrying of public mail. But there were excellent arrangements, as Le Bon puts it in his *Civilization of India*, for carrying the King's mail. Letters and information reached them quickly and properly. Ibn Batuta describes in detail the postal system as it prevailed in or about 1324 A.D. There were two kinds of couriers, horse and foot, posted at regular intervals. Foot-couriers carried a whip in their hands about two cubits long and small bells on their heads.<sup>97</sup> Nizam-ud-din, author of the *Tabaqat*, praises the postal system of Sikandar Lodi.<sup>98</sup> The King received daily the report of prices and occurrences in *parganas* of his dominions.<sup>99</sup> Babar tried to improve upon it and ordered a tower to be built at every ninth *kuroh*. At every 18th *kuroh* (13 or 14 miles) were to be kept

ready six post-horses for carrying the mail.<sup>100</sup> Its maintenance expenses were to be borne by the master of the neighbouring *pargana*. To facilitate communications Babar also ordered a road to be built from Agra to Kabul.<sup>101</sup>

### Dak-chaukis

Sher Shah's *sarais* were also the stations of *dak-chaukis* (mail stages). Two government horses were kept ready in each *sarai* for carrying persons and despatches. By *dak-chaukis* news reached him every day from Nilab and the extremity of Bengal.<sup>102</sup> Akbar improved upon Sher Shah's system and established throughout his dominions two horses and several runners at every fifth *kuroh*. They were employed to convey letters from and to court. Whenever a royal *farman* or a letter from a nobleman reached a *chauki*, it was immediately conveyed to the next *chauki* by a rider. According to Ferishta, 50 *kurohs* were thus covered in 24 hours. A letter reached Ahmedabad and Gujarat, a distance of about 500 miles, in five days.<sup>103</sup>

### Runners under Akbar and Jahangir

Akbar had in his employment for an emergency 4,000 runners, some of whom would cover a distance of 700 miles in ten days.<sup>104</sup> Pelsaert was surprised at the incredible speed with which the royal letters were transmitted during Jahangir's time. Runners had been posted in the villages four or five *kurohs*<sup>105</sup> apart and they took their turn of duty day and night. As soon as a letter was delivered, he would run with it and hand it over to another messenger at the next *chauki* who would deliver it to the next one, and so on. According to Tavernier, it was thought inauspicious to hand over the letters. In fact, they were thrown at the feet of the runner who would run with them to the next stage.<sup>106</sup> The letters thus travelled day and night at the speed of about 80 *kos* in 24 hours and reached their destinations.<sup>107</sup> In some cases they covered as many as 50 to 100 *kos* a day.<sup>1071</sup> It is no wonder, then, that melons and oranges from Karez and Bengal, situated at a distance of 1,400 and 1,000 miles respectively, were received in Delhi quite fresh.<sup>108</sup>

Aurangzeb issued strict orders that postal runners were to cover one *jaribi*<sup>109</sup> *kuroh* in one *ghari*. If a runner failed to cover the fixed distance or reached the destination late, he



was fined. The fine amounted to one-fourth of his salary. It took 12 days for a runner to reach Delhi from Ahmedabad. In an emergency, however, the distance was covered in a week. The local zamindars, *faujdars* and police officials were responsible for the safety of these runners. Each province had a large number of these posts or *dak-chaukis*. For example, there were 20 *dak-chaukis* between Ahmedabad and Ajmer and 62 runners;<sup>110</sup> between Ahmedabad and Bharoach, there were 16 posts and 35 runners.<sup>111</sup>

### Pigeons as letter-carriers

The Mughals did not practise the ancient custom of sending letters through pigeons on any large scale. However, there is a reference in the *Ain* to a special variety of pigeons known as the "rath pigeons" which were trained to carry letters from a great distance.<sup>112</sup> Jahangir observes that they would deliver messages from Mandu (Malva) to Burhanpore normally in three hours. But if the weather was bad, they took five to six hours.<sup>113</sup> Quli Ali of Bukhara, Masti of Samarqand, Mullazada, Sikandar Chela, Haji Qasim of Balkh, Abdul Latif of Bukhara, Habib of Shiraz were some of the famous pigeon-trainers during Akbar's time.<sup>114</sup>

Pigeons were also employed by the nobles to bring them the news of the King's arrival at the Public Hall. While the noble kept himself in readiness at home, a servant with two pigeons of different colours waited at the Hall. As soon as the King left his palace, he would release a pigeon of a particular colour, thus conveying the news to his masters.<sup>115</sup>

The Central Government was kept informed of happenings in different parts of the country by the following agencies :

### Public reporters

*Waqai-navis* : He was a public reporter, appointed by the Central Government in each province to report to the King the occurrences of those places. He received reports from his agents appointed in the various *parganas* and incorporated what he thought suitable in the weekly provincial newsletter. He had his clerks appointed in the offices of the *subedar*, *diwan*, *faujdar*, *kotwal*, etc. The contents of his letters were communicated to the *subedar*, and if he was posted to a field

army, to the general in command, before they were sent to the Emperor.

### Secret reporters

*Sawanih nigar* or *Khufia-navis* (a secret news-writer) reported matters to the Emperor without any knowledge of the provincial authorities. They resided and worked secretly in the *subas* and sent their reports.

### Spies

*Harkara*—literally, carrier of news—was in fact a spy who kept his agents in the office of the local authorities like *waqai-navis* and *sawanih nigar*. The *harkara* reported the news to the governor of the *suba* and also sent closed envelopes to the court.

*Waqai* was sent once a week, *sawanih* twice and the *akhbar* of *harkaras* once a month. All these news-reporters worked under the direction of *darogah-i-dak-chauki* or Superintendent of Posts and Intelligence. All reports were received by him and handed over to the *wazir* unopened for submission to the Emperor.<sup>116</sup>

### Classes of official letters

There were the following classes of official letters : *farman*, *shuqqa*, *ahkam*—any letter addressed by the Emperor directly to any other person, subject, prince, contemporary sovereign was included in this category ; *nishan*, a letter addressed by a prince to anyone except the Emperor ; *arzdasht*, a letter from any subject to the Emperor or a prince and also from a prince to the Emperor ; *hasb-ul-hukm*, a letter written by a minister under the directions of the Emperor ; *ahkam* and *ramz*, notes and points dictated by the Emperor as material for official letters to be later on drafted in the conventional style ; *sanad*, a letter of appointment ; *parwana*, an administrative order or ruling to a subordinate official, usually the result of a suit at court ; *dastak*, a short official pass or permit for transit of goods ; and *ruqqa*, a private letter.<sup>117</sup>

The royal *farmans*, written in a large and beautiful hand on paper sprinkled with gold dust, were sealed and rolled up and put in a bag of cloth of gold, the mouth of which was tied with

coloured strings and sealed with wax with seals of the *Wazir*. Such bags were called *khiratas*.<sup>118</sup>

### Letters abroad

Special measures were adopted for the security of the letters sent abroad to emperors or principal ministers. Letters were enclosed in a large hollow cylinder of bamboo, with an opening at one end and about two inches long. After putting in the letter, this opening was sealed. Thus the letter was carried neat and clean unaffected by rain or dust.<sup>119</sup>

### Royal treasury

The royal treasury was transmitted to the Centre from the various parts in much the same manner as the mail. Unlike the mail, however, it changed posts on the frontiers of the provinces only. The *Subedar* received it on the border of his province and carried it to the fort under special supervision. He then loaded the treasury into another carriage and sent it onward under heavy guard.<sup>120</sup> The same practice was followed by all the *Subedars* till the treasury reached the Centre.

### Private post

There were no regular arrangements for private post. It was either entrusted to these agencies or in some cases despatched through special messengers. Hawkins refers to the news sent by the merchants of Goa about the arrival of English ships at the port. Three days after, news came of their arrival at Surat.<sup>121</sup> Badaoni refers to regular correspondence and even exchange of gifts between him and his friend Yaqub of Kashmir.<sup>122</sup> The rich people and merchants had their own special messengers. With a plume on their heads and bells fixed to the belt, they would run at a steady pace. To avoid fatigue, they took large quantities of opium.<sup>123</sup> Private individuals utilised the services of a touring acquaintance to send letters to their friends or relatives in the areas he was likely to visit.

### Despatch of money

An individual despatched money to distant places through *sarrafs* who were scrupulously honest in their dealings. He would hand over the amount to the *sarrafi* who wrote on a

slip of paper in Hindi, without any seal or envelope, instructions to their agents who worked in different parts of the country. This paper was called *hundi*. On showing it, payment was at once made by the agent without any argument or hesitation. Sometimes a person would sell the *hundi* at a small discount. The purchaser would himself get the amount from the proper place.<sup>124</sup> The traders would also sometimes place their goods at the disposal of the *sarrafs* who would arrange to send them to their destination safely on some payment.

### Sarais

Our study of the means of communication during medieval time would not be complete without a reference to the sarais or rest-houses. They were, in fact, means for postal communication and a halting stage for weary travellers.<sup>125</sup> "These sarais," to quote Dr. Qanungo, "were the veritable arteries of the Empire, diffusing a new life among its hitherto benumbed limbs."<sup>126</sup> European travellers pay handsome tributes to the Mughal emperors for the construction and maintenance of sarais throughout the length and breadth of the empire.<sup>127</sup> Some philanthropists also built sarais as an act of charity.<sup>128</sup> Akbar had given orders for the building of sarais throughout his dominions.<sup>129</sup> *Ain* corroborates it.<sup>130</sup> Nicholas Withington, who visited India during Jahagir's time, found a sarai or a lodging-house at every 10 *kos*. There were arrangements for cooking and provisions for cattle.<sup>131</sup> The Emperor gave orders for the construction of a milestone at each *kos* and the sinking of a well at every third mile.<sup>132</sup> He was very particular that a sarai or a mosque be built near all those roads which had been the scene of thefts and robberies.<sup>133</sup> Manucci, during Aurangzeb's time, saw these sarais on almost every route. But they seemed to have been greatly neglected, for Norris found them "dirty and nasty, fit for nobody but carters and camel drivers." Bernier, too, is critical of these sarais where "men, women and animals were all housed together."<sup>134</sup> Manucci, however, admires some of the big sarais which were like "fortified palaces with their bastions and strong gates." They were made of stone or of brick. Mandelslo praises the sarais built at Agra where excellent arrangements had been made for the stay and safety of the belongings.<sup>135</sup> Some of these sarais

were spacious enough to accommodate as many as 1,000 persons, camels and carriages. There were separate quarters for men and women.<sup>136</sup> But perhaps the best sarai was that of Begam Sahiba built at Delhi by Jahanara, the eldest daughter of Shahjahan.<sup>137</sup> Bernier compared it to Palace Royale at Paris.<sup>138</sup> It had upper chambers, lovely gardens and ornamented reservoirs.<sup>139</sup> In this sarai stayed mostly rich merchants from foreign countries with their merchandise from Persia, Uzbekistan, etc. in complete safety.<sup>140</sup> Each sarai was under the charge of an official who would close the gates at sunset calling upon everyone to check his belongings. Before opening the gates next morning, he would again request the inmates to take care of their property. Gates were opened only after everyone had satisfied himself about his things. If anything was reported missing, gates were kept closed and a thorough search was ordered and the thieves caught red-handed.<sup>141</sup>

## NOTES

1. Rennel, *Memoir of a Map of Hindostan or The Mogul Empire*, London, 1788, p. 255. For important routes see Foster, *Early Travels*, p. 53 ; Purchas, *India*, Vol. X, pp. 172-81.
2. Foster, *English Factories in India* (1665-67), p. 570. Also see Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections*, edited Smith, 1915, p. 301. As late as 1824 Bishop Heber wrote about the miserable condition of the roads in Upper India. "There are no roads at all and the tracks which we follow are often such as to require care even on horseback."
3. For Sher Shah see *T.A.*, p. 232, Badaoni, I, p. 472, E & D, Vol. IV, p. 417 ; for Akbar's measures to build bridges refer to Smith, *Akbar, the Great Mogul*, p. 413.
4. *Roe's Embassy*, 1899, p. 298 ; Tavernier, I, Chap. III, p. 29 ; Foster, *Early Travels*, p. 314 ; W. Foster ; *English Factories (1646-80)*, p. 193.
5. Foster, *Early Travels*, p. 260.
6. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 357.
7. Tavernier, I, p. 28.
8. Ovington, p. 254 ; *Early Travels*, p. 311.
9. *Ibid.*

10. *Early Travels*, p. 311 ; Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 73.
11. Caesar Frederick, quoted by T.V. Mahalingham, *Economlc Life in the Vijayanagar Empire*, p. 153.
12. Purchas, X, p. 98.
13. Thevenot, edition 1681, Chap. xxix.
14. Tavernier, p. 29.
15. De Laet, p. 83.
16. Terry in *Early Travels* by Foster, p. 312.
17. Manrique, II (1629-43), p. 145.
18. Samuel Purchas' *India*, pp. 78-79 ; also for Gujarat, *Ain II* (Jarrett), p. 240.
19. T.V. Mahalingham, *Life in the Vijayanagar Empire*, p. 153.
20. Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
21. Each ox, according to Thevenot, cost about 200 crowns. Thevenot (Edition 1681), Chap. XXIX.
22. Mandelslo, III, p. 122.
23. Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 73 ; Mandelslo, III, p. 65. For a beautiful contemporary painting of a 'Bullock Chariot' by Abul Hasan Nadiruz Zaman, the greatest painter of Jahangir's time, refer to Shanti Swarup, *The Arts and Crafts of India and Pakistan*, Taraporevala, 1957, facing page 14.
24. *History of East Indies*, Vol. I, pp. 288-89.
25. Tavernier, Chap. III, p. 29.
26. From Surat to Agra was 40 days journey and would cost about Rs. 40 to Rs. 45. Tavernier, Chap. III, p. 29.
27. Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 25.
28. J.S. Hoyland, *The Commentary of Father S.J. Monserrate on the Journey to the Court of Akbar*, p. 199.
29. *Roe's Embassy*, edited by Hakluyt Society (1899), p. 6.
30. S.M. Latif, *Agra, Historical and Descriptive*, p. 28.
31. Mandelslo, p. 65.
32. For a drawing showing a woman riding an ass refer to Petermundy, II, p. 192. The ass is adorned with a "collar of cocker (coche shell) bells almost as big as a hen's eggs, a frontlet of netting work and beads, their horns tipped with brass, etc." *Ibid.*
33. *Roe's Embassy*, p. 298.

- 33.<sup>1</sup> Sorley, H.T., *Shah Abdul Latif Bhatti*, Oxford, 1941, p. 89.
34. Petermundy, II, pp. 245, 291.
35. *Ain* I, (1939), p. 151.
36. *Ibid.*
37. Petermundy, II (p. 190) has *kojavas* (camel pannier) covered with red.
38. *Ain*, I, pp. 152-53.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 138 ; also see Mandelslo, III, p. 65.
40. Ranking's *Historical Researches*, p. 286 ; for the use of elephants in State processions refer to H.H. Das, *Norris' Embassy to Aurangzeb*, Calcutta, 1959, p. 152.
41. *Ain*, I, *op. cit.*, p. 129. The price of an elephant varied from one lakh rupees to one hundred rupees. *Ibid.*, p. 124-25.
42. *Padshahnama*, I, p. 967.
43. *Ain*, I, *op. cit.*, p. 138.
44. *Ain*, I, *op. cit.*, pp. 134-36.
45. *Ain*, I, *op. cit.*, p. 160.
46. *Ibid.*, pp. 161-62.
47. *Ain*, I, *op. cit.*, p. 140.
48. Abul Fazl quoted by T.K. Raychaudhuri, *Bengal under Akbar and Jahangir*, 1953, pp. 192-93 ; *Ain*, Jarrett, II, p. 350.
49. *Ain*, I, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-44.
50. See Hobson-Jobson, p. 503 ; also see Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 76.
51. *Ibid.* ; Tavernier, I, Chap. III, p. 29.
52. *Ibid.*
53. For a contemporary painting refer to Plate XLII, *Storia*, Vol. IV, facing page 122 ; also see Petermundy, II, p. 192.
54. Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 72 ; also see H.H. Das, *Norris' Embassy to Aurangzeb*, Calcutta, 1959, p. 162.
55. T.K. Raychaudhuri, *Bengal under Akbar and Jahangir*, 1953, p. 192.
56. *Storia*, Vol. IV, Plate XLI, facing p. 92.
57. *Ain*, II, Jarrett (1891), p. 122 ; T.K. Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 192.
58. *A.N.*, I, p. 203 ; *Tr.*, I, p. 315.
59. *Ain*, II, revised Sarkar, p. 134.
60. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 187.

61. Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 76.
62. For a contemporary painting of *Chandol* refer to Plate XXXIX, *Storia*, Vol. IV, facing page 32.
63. T.C. Das Gupta, *Aspects of Bengali Society from Old Bengali Literature*, Calcutta, 1935, pp. 301-2.
64. *Ain*, I (Bloch), p. 275.
65. *Ibid.*
66. Petermundy, II, p. 191.
67. *Ibid*, p. 190 ; for a contemporary painting refer to *Storia*, Vol. II, Plate XL, facing page 62.
68. *Storia*, Vol. I, pp. 112, 158, etc ; also see Lalit Kala Akademi, Miniatures, Paintings of Sri Moti Chand Khajanchi Collection, Plate 68.
69. Balakrishna, *Commercial Relations between England and India (1600-1757)*, pp. 279-81. Also see Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, p. 171 ; Tavernier, I, p. 128 ; II, pp. 266-67 ; *Voyage of Pyrard De Laval*, p. 182 ; Commissariat's *History of Gujarat*, p. 534.
70. Hamilton, I, p. 124.
71. Major, *India*, p. 27 ; Varthema, p. 154 quoted in T.V. Mahalingham, *Economic Life in Vijayanagar*, 1954, p. 146.
72. *Storia*, I, p. 162. Also see Hamilton, I, p. 236.
73. Ovington, p. 280.
74. *Chahar Gulshan*, p. 40.
75. *A.N.*, II, p. 76 ; Tr., II, p. 118.
76. *Ain*, Jarrett, II, 1891, p. 122.
77. *Chahar Gulshan*, Chalterman, p. 40 (MS.)
78. *A.N.*, I, p. 360 ; Tr., I, p. 364, f.n. 2.
79. Pinkerton's *Voyages* (Collections) ; Hamilton (1688-1723), Vol. VIII, p. 307.
80. *A.N.*, III, p. 85 ; Tr. III, p. 120. Also see *Qanoon-i-Humayun*, trans., pp. 42-44.
81. *Qanoon-i-Humayun*, trans., p. 45.
82. Mahalingham, *op. cit.*, p. 148.
83. Bernier (1891), p. 215.
84. Bernier (edition revised by Smith), pp. 213-14.
85. Tavernier, I, Chap. III, p. 29.
86. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 187.



87. *Roe's Embassy*, p. 298.
88. Tavernier, I, Chap. III, p. 29.
89. Terry in *Early Travels* by Foster, p. 314; Tavernier, I, Chap. III, p. 29.
90. *Travels of Sidi Ali Reis*, p. 351.
91. *Storia*, I, pp. 220-21.
92. Bernier (1891), pp. 373-74. In Persia, according to the traveller, things were much worse.
93. H.H. Das, *Norris' Embassy to Aurangzeb*, p. 207.
94. *Storia*, I, pp. 220-21.
95. Ambassador of King William III of England to the Court of Aurangzeb.
96. H.H. Das, *Norris' Embassy*, p. 206.
97. S. Lee, *Travels of Ibn Batuta*, pp. 101-2.
98. The institution of *dak-chaukis* is, however, attributed to Ala-ud-din Khalji. Whenever he sent an army or an expedition, it was his practice to establish posts on the road, and at every post relays of horses were stationed. At every half or quarter *kos* runners were posted, and officers and report-writers were appointed. The King would thus receive the news of his army's march daily or after two or three days. *Tarikh-i-Firoze Shahi*, E. & D., Vol. III, p. 203.
99. *T.A.*, I, pp. 337-38.
100. *B.N.* (Bev.), II, pp. 629-30.
101. Also see *Ibid.*, p. 626.
102. Ferishta, p. 228, quoted by Qanungo, *Sher Shah*, p. 392.
103. Ferishta, Briggs, Vol. II.
104. Ferishta, I, p. 272.
105. According to Hamilton, at every 10th mile. *A New Account of East Indies*, Vol. I, p. 150.
106. Tavernier, p. 100.
107. *Jahangir's India*, p. 58.
- 107.<sup>1</sup> *Ain*, I, p. 150.
108. *Tuzuk*, pp. 173-74, 211.
109. One *jaribi* equalled 25 *dhara* and one *dhara* amounted to 42 fingers.
110. The total pay of the runners between these *chaukis* amounted to Rs. 255.

111. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* (Bombay Edition), Vol. II, pp. 117-18, quoted in *Islamic Culture*, Vol. XVII (1944).
112. *Ain*, I (Bloch), p. 314.
113. *Tuzuk* (Lucknow Edition), p. 192.
114. *Ain* (Bloch), p. 302.
115. *Storia*, II, p. 407.
116. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Sup. 185, *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi* (Paris. MS. 101a); *Alamgirnama*, 1081, quoted in Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, pp. 71-75.
117. Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, pp. 233-34.
118. *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 264, Purchas, IX, 50; Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, pp. 235-36.
119. Ovington, p. 250.
120. *Riyed-us-Salatin* (Cal. ed.), p. 257. The royal treasury was shifted to Agra from Delhi on 1,400 *Irabas* or carriages drawn by bullocks in the 9th year of Aurangzeb's reign. S.M. Latif, *Agra, Historical and Descriptive*, p. 42.
121. Hawkins' *Voyages*, Hak. Soc. 1877, pp. 81, 94.
122. Badaoni (MS.), pp. 44-45.
123. Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 62.
124. See *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh*. Also see Tavernier's *Travels in India*, ed. by Ball, Vol. I, pp. 36-37; William Foster, *The English Factories in India (1637-1641)*, p. 84.
125. De Laet, p. 55.
126. Qanungo, *Sher Shah*, p. 392.
127. Foster, *Early Travels*, p. 311; Mandelslo, p. 65; Ovington, p. 312; William Hawkins in *Early Travels*, p. 144; *Storia*, I, p. 116; *The Voyage of M. Joseph Salbancke through India, Persia, part of Turkie, the Persian Gulf and Arabia*; Purchas' *India*, Vol. 3, p. 262.
128. Thevenot, Chap. XXXV.
129. *A.N.*, III, p. 262; Tr., III, p. 381. Also see *Storia*, I, p. 116.
130. *Ain*, I (Bloch), p. 232.
131. *Early Travels*, op. cit., p. 225. Also Finch in *Ibid* p. 179.
132. *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri* (Urdu), p. 88.
133. *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* (Lowe), p. 6.
134. Bernier, p. 235.

135. Mandelslo, p. 35.
136. *Storia*, I, p. 68.
137. It was razed to the ground after the Mutiny.
138. Bernier, p. 28.
139. *Storia*, II, p. 83.
140. Bernier, p. 28.
141. *Storia*, I, p. 68.

## CHAPTER 12

# Literature

## PERSIAN POETRY

### Introduction

Persian poetry attained new heights under the inspiring patronage of Mughal monarchs and their nobles. There is hardly a chronicle of the period which does not refer to the poetic celebrities that thrived during the age. In fact, the period was so deeply permeated with the spirit of poetry that every educated person attempted versification of a fairly good order. The unprecedented recognition of art by the Mughal court and the Deccan rulers encouraged migration to India of a large number of poets from Persia, Bukhara, Samarkand, etc., converting the country into a veritable nest of singing birds.

It is interesting to note that Jami, the leader of the poetic galaxy, was keen on visiting India during the reign of Babar. Even Hafiz could not resist the temptation of such a visit, and would have certainly reached India but for a cyclone that made him change his mind. The experience is effectively epitomized in the following couplet:

بس آسان می نمود اول غم دریا بوی در  
غلط گفتم که یک موجش بصد گوهر نمی ارزد

*The hope of finding pearls made the hazards of voyaging appear insignificant in the beginning. But sorry, I have erred, for even a hundred pearls are not worth the perils of a single stormy wave.*

Abul Fazl enumerates 75 poets who came to India during Akbar's time. This influx of poets continued during the reigns of Jahangir and Shahjahan. Some of the immigrant

poets, were weighed in silver. The Mughal emperors were extremely liberal in their patronage of poetry. Some of the poets were even appointed commanders of 5,000—for example, Ghaznavi, and Zaya Khan. *Jagirs* were granted to Ghazali, Faizi, Hayati and many others for the excellence of their poems. Huge rewards in cash were also given. Besides the emperors, nobles and grandees patronised poetry. Abul Fath Gilani, Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan, Ali Quli Khan, Khan-i-Zaman, Zafar Khan, Khan-i-Azam Kokaltash, and the famous Ibrahim Adil Shah II of Bijapur were known for their liberal patronage of poets and scholars. Zafar Khan, Governor of Kashmir, is said to have prepared a *bayaz* which contained the selective poems of each poet in his own hand with his photograph on the reverse.

It was in this congenial atmosphere that Persian poetry thrived and lured Iranian poets to come to India and enjoy the admiration which was withheld in their own country.

Ali Quli Salim of Tehran says:

نیست در ایران زمین سامانِ تحصیلِ کمال  
تا نیامد سوئے هندوستانِ حنا رنگین نشد

*Iran hardly offers palpable means for achieving perfection;  
Henna acquires no colour  
until it finds its way to India.*

Kalim says :

اسیرِ ہندم و زریں رفتن بیجا پیشیانم  
کجا خواہد رساندن پرفشانی مرغِ بے مل را  
بر ایران سے رود نالالِ کلیم از شوقِ ہماہاں  
پائے دیگران پہچوں جس طے کردہ منزل را  
ز شوقِ ہند زان سال چشمِ حسرت بر قفا دارم  
کہ تو ہم گر براہ آرم نمی بینم مقابل را

*A captive of India that I am,  
I regret this enforced journey.*

*But whither shall this wing-fluttering  
carry the lacerated bird?*

*Kalim goes lamenting towards Iran  
dragged by the company of eager fellow-travellers,  
covering like the camel bell  
each stage of the journey as on others' feet.*

*Drawn by love and fondness for India,  
I look back with such intense longing  
that even if I set my face unto  
the road nothing meets my eye.*

Mirza Saib, who flourished during Aurangzeb's reign when the patronage of Persian poetry had certainly received a setback due to the orthodox views of the Emperor, says:

ہر دل سفر بند کہ در ہر دل ہست  
رض سوداے تو در هیچ سرعیت نہست

*Like the desire to go to India which prossesses every heart,  
there is not a head which does not dance to the tune of  
thy love.*

Thus there were quite a large number of poets to illumine the Indo-Persian poetry during the Mughal period. The contemporary Safavi court could not boast poets of equal merit or originality. It was not lack of genius, but of court patronage that was mainly responsible for this setback. To borrow the words of Dr. Hermann Ethe, these poets of the 16th and 17th centuries produced the "Indian Summer of Persian Poetry." Strong national sentiments of the Persians had made them rather chary of recognizing the poetic talents of the Indians. Hadi Hasan in his *Mughal Poetry: Its Cultural and Historical Value* has examined the views of Iranians and the Europeans about Mughal poetry. He comes to the conclusion that "Persian criticism of Mughal poetry is altogether vague." Browne has tried to analyse the reasons for the denunciation of Mughal poetry by Persians—"disparagement of national heroes and monuments, the use of unfamiliar words, the distortion of the meaning of

familiar words, the coinage of new words, and above all, the hair-splitting subtlety of the Indian mind which makes the sweetheart's mouth the end of a hair and then literary splits the hair." The disapprobation of the Persian works *Atashkada* by Lutf Ali Beg Azar and the *Majma-ul-Fusaha* by Riza Quli Khan is sweeping in the case of poets who came to India. They praise all those poets who stayed on in Iran and find fault with such well-known masters of style as Faizi, Urfi, Zuhuri and Saib. In most cases no critical account is given about the poetical demerits of these poets except advancing the plea that "they were not liked by Persians in that age." However, there were independent critics who did not hesitate to properly evaluate the contribution of these poets of Mughal India. "After Jami," writes Gibb, "Urfi and Faizi were the chief Persian influences on Turkish poetry." Nefi, the greatest Turkish poet of the 17th century, is seen vying with Urfi, and it is significant that some of the best *qasidas* and *diwans* of Urfi are found in the libraries of Ankara and Istanbul.

The main themes of the Persian poets in India were : mysticism ; divine love ; beauty of the sweetheart ; praise of God, Prophet and the beloved.

*Waqai-goi*, *masalia*, *mazmun afrini* and *khial bandi* were the chief features of the poetry produced during the period. All forms of poetry—*ghazals*, *qasidas*, *qitas*—were produced in abundance during the Mughal period. Most of the poets, however, expressed themselves through the medium of *ghazal*. Shibli rightly calls it the "age of *ghazals*."

In the sphere of *ghazals*, Urfi of Shiraz, Saib Tabrizi, Naziri Nishapuri, Hakim Shafai, and Ali Naqi excelled others. Among the *qasida* writers, Urfi, Zuhuri and Talib Amuli distinguished themselves. In the sphere of *masnavis* there was some definite deterioration. It was no longer the medium of expression for moral or historical themes in a simple and unrheterical style. Kalim's *Shahjahan-Nama*, written in a highly ornamental style, may be cited as an example. *Rubai* (quatrain) provided a convenient medium to the poets to tackle different philosophical themes. There was, however, a significant departure from the traditional style. An attempt was made to express an idea in one verse which was usually done in two or three verses. It made it difficult for the reader to comprehend the true

meaning. Naziri and Sarmad were the two well-known *rubai* writers of the period.

Urfi, Qudsi, Talib Amuli, Anwari and Muhammad Jan excelled in the composition of *qasidas*. Urfi was the creator of a new style in this particular branch of poetry. The "novelty in this style lay, apart from the introduction of a number of fresh terms into the conventional vocabulary of poetry, in the deposition of rhetoric from the chief seat and the enthronement of loftiness of tone and stateliness of language in its stead." Shibli gives him the lofty title of the "king of *qasidas*." Qudsi no doubt lacked Urfi's forceful diction and Amuli's metaphors and similes. Yet he surpassed both in his originality of themes. Qudsi presented a beautiful *qasida* to Shahjahan in 1145 A.H. The Emperor was so much pleased with his performance that he was weighed in silver. Talib Amuli's compositions are characterized by the novelty of themes, figurative language, and fine allegories and metaphors. I have taken note of some of the important Persian poets during the Mughal times in the following pages.

### Babar

The first of the Mughals, Babar (1483-1530),<sup>1</sup> was not only a very successful warrior and ruler, but also a man of letters, a poet and calligrapher. He was "the last point of connection between Turki and Persian and a singular exception to the almost recognised practice of the literature of his time in leaving his memoirs in the Turki dialect." Fresh from Turkistan, his partiality for Turki, his native tongue, was but natural. He tried to keep Turki on a par with the acknowledged Persian of his court. He was, however, fond of Persian, and quoted frequently from well-known classical poets of Persia, such as Firdausi, Nizami, Saadi, Hafiz, Jami and others. He also composed verses in Persian. Some of his verses written in refined, elegant and simple Persian have come down to us under the pen-name of Babar:

نوروز تو بہارِ دے ودلبری خوش است  
بابر یہ عیشِ کوش کہ عالم دوبارہ نیست



*The New Year, the spring, the wine and the beloved  
are joyful ;*

*Babar, make merry, for the world will not be there  
for you a second time.*

Sometimes, however, this lively Padshah expressed feelings of repentance in his verses. When he fell ill in 1525 A.D., he considered his illness to be divine punishment for his frivolous poetry, and after having asked God for mercy, "I broke my pen." Addressing Khwajah Nasir-ud-Din Ubaidullah, he says :

در هوای نفسِ گمراه عمر ضائع کرده ایم  
پیشِ اهلِ اللہ از اتعالِ خود شرمندہ ایم

*We have frittered our life away  
pandering to our misdirected passions  
And are really ashamed of  
our actions before godly beings.*

Abul Fazl and Nizam-ud-Din, the author of the *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, praise him for his very "charming verses." Babar's language is chaste, simple and fresh. Nizam-ud-Din calls him master of the art of poetry. According to Abul Fazl, he also wrote *Masnavi-i-Mubin* (*Mubayyan*), a didactic *masnawi* in Persian. It was a versified treatise on Muhammadan Law and Theology. Babar was also an anthologist and is said to have collected some of the choicest poems both in Persian and Turki. The poetical talent of Babar was inherited by most of his children.

#### Qandhari and Wafai

The most important among the talented poets who had accompanied Babar to India were Atashi Qandhari<sup>2</sup> and Zain-ud-Din Wafai.<sup>3</sup> Atashi wrote beautiful verses. Badaoni quotes several of them in his *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*. Here is a verse composed by him :

سر شکم رفته رفته بے تو دریا شد تماشا کن  
بیاد رشتی چشم نشیں و سیر دریا کن

*Behold, my tears in thy absence  
have by and by swelled into a sea.  
Come, seat thyself in the boat of my eye  
and go promenading all over.*

He died in Lahore in 1565 A.D. Wafai excelled in chronograms and enigmas. According to Badaoni, Wafai was one of the greatest scholars of the age. He translated Turki memoirs of Babar into Persian and wrote a commentary on *Mubayyan*, a treatise written by Babar on Hanafi jurisprudence.

Mulla Shihab-ud-Din, better known as Mulla Shihab,\* was reputed for his enigmas. According to Nizam-ud-Din, his poetical name was Haqiri. Maulana Baqai<sup>5</sup> is also said to have written a *masnavi* in the metre of the *Makhzan-i-Asrar*.

### Humayun

With the accession of Humayun,\* a new era began in the history of Persian literature. It marked a distinct break with Turki, the native language of the Timurids and gave a new impetus to Persian. Humayun used Turki rarely and that too only in his confidential talks. The Emperor had a metrical turn of mind, and according to Nizam-ud-Din, he wrote beautiful verses. He had composed a *diwan* which was in the Imperial Library during Akbar's time. His *diwan* consists of 246 verses, comprising 16 *ghazals*, 60 *quatrains*, a *masnavi* and *fards*. The Patna manuscript of the *diwan* of Humayun is perhaps the world's solitary copy. He composed all kinds of poetry except *qasidas* and *gitas*, but was specially good at *rubai* and *ghazal*. Simplicity, brevity and compactness are the features of his poetry.

Humayun was a mystic and had some foreboding of his death when he composed this verse :

یارب بکمال خاصم گردان    ۞   عارف بقائق خواصم گردان  
از عقل جفا کار دل افکار شدم    ۞   دیوانه خودخواں و علایم گردان

*O God, with Thy infinite grace, make me wholly Thine :  
make me a gnostic of Thy Special Substances (Names and  
Attributes). I am sore oppressed by the tyranny of reason :*

*call me Thy madman and release me from earthly bondage.  
(Translation by Hadi Hasan)*

His poems abound in metaphors. When Humayun was in exile, he wrote to Shah Tahmasp :

*All kings desire the shadow of the huma but here is Huma  
(Humayun) who is seeking the shadow of a king.*

Sometimes Humayun corrected the compositions of other poets. A few instances have been cited by Badaoni in his *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*.

#### **Gulbadan and Kamran**

Gulbadan Begum composed verses. Beveridge quotes one of her couplets from the *Tazkirat-ul-Khawatin* :

ہر پری روئے کہ او بہ عاشق خود یار نیست  
تو یقین می داں کہ یسج از عسمر بر خوردار نیست

*A beauty that is unfaithful to the lover  
Believe me, she will always find life untrue to her.*

Kamran<sup>7</sup> also was a poet of some distinction. Hadi Hasan quotes his congratulatory poem presented to Humayun when he ascended the throne in 937 A.H. :

*May thy realm perpetually increase; may thy star  
continue to rise !*

*May the dust of thy road be the antimony for my eyes—  
dejected as I am !*

*May the dust which rises from the road traversed by  
the beloved (Layla) settle in the eyes of the lover  
(Majnun), its proper place !*

*May a hundred Dariuses and Fariduns be thy slaves,  
like me !*

*Whosoever doth not encompass thee (with his love), may  
he be expelled from the vault of heaven !*

*Kamran, so long as the world lasts, may Humayun be  
the king of the world !*

Humayun gathered around him a galaxy of poets. Maulana Wahid-ud-Din Abu Wajid<sup>8</sup> excelled all in the composition of poetry and was given the title of *Amir-ul-Shoara* or

chief of the poets. His poetry is full of pathos and pangs of spiritual love.

### Kahi

Maulana Qasim-i-Kahi<sup>9</sup> wrote simple and sweet verses. Abul Fazl counts him among the foremost poets of Akbar's court. Badaoni considered him to be unrivalled in the composition of chronograms. His poems were very popular among the Sufis. Here is a beautiful verse composed by Kahi:

نه نرگس است عیاں بر سر مزار مرا  
سفید شد بریت چشم انتظار مرا

*Over my grave it is not the Narcissus that  
appears to have blossomed. In fact it is  
my very eye that has turned white after long waiting.*

He compiled a *diwan* consisting of *qasidas*, *masnavis*, *rubais* and *ghazals*. He wrote a *masnavi*, *Gul Afshan*, in reply to the *Bostan* of Saadi. Both Badaoni and Abul Fazl admire the simplicity and sweetness of his verses.

Kahi flourished during the reigns of Humayun and Akbar, and is said to have attained the age of 120. He received a reward of one lakh tankas (Rs. 5,000) from Emperor Akbar for an ode in which the word 'fil' — elephant — occurred in each verse.

Hadi Hasan has quoted the entire Ode in his work *A Golden Treasury of Persian Poetry* :

*Seeing the fondness of my beloved for elephants, I have  
spent the cash of my life on the path of the elephant.  
Like an elephant I throw dust on my head wherever I go,  
if I do not see my mahout on my head.*

*So that my love may wax every moment that mahout drives  
his raging elephant very close to me.*

*I want to trumpet like a mad elephant all the time so that  
I may disclose my hidden secret.*

*I repeat, 'tis better to hide love : 'tis best to control my  
tongue like an elephant.*

*At the feet of the king's elephant (Bishop), Qasim-i-Kahi*

*laid his face (castle) : this was his final move on the chess-board of life.*

*The king who overthrows elephants is Jalal-ud-Din Muhammad Akbar — he who bestows golden elephants on his poets.*

*May the elephant of the sky be under the goad of his authority so that it may recognise its master, the Lord of Conjunction.*

Kahi had no scruples to steal ideas from others. When someone pointed it out to him, he replied, "I have never asked you to believe that my poems were wholly mine. If they please you not, take a pen-knife and erase them from the copies of my *diwan*." He led a free and unconventional life and earned the enmity of the orthodox Badaoni and others.

#### Maulana Janubi

Maulana Janubi<sup>10</sup> (Januni, according to Badaoni) was known for his *qasidas* and the 38 couplets he wrote in honour of the Emperor.

According to Professor Ghani, "the tendency to create subtleties in the use of figures of speech and exhaust skill on the artful devices, which is a striking feature of the later Mughal age, is also visible in his writings." For example, he says:

شہنشاہِ دین پادشاہِ زمان  
ز بختِ ہمایوں شدہ کامران

*The Emperor of Faith and the King of the Age  
Became victorious through his good fortune.*

#### Tahir

Shah-Tahir Dakhan<sup>11</sup> was well-versed in natural and descriptive poetry and also composed astronomical verses. He was, according to Ghani, an excellent poet and author of several poetical works consisting mostly of *masnavis* and *qasidas* in praise of Humayun and Nizam Shah Bihari.

Shaikh Abul Wajid and Khawaja Ayub<sup>12</sup> were the other two well-known poets of the period. The for-

mer had specialised in *ghazals*, while the latter wrote all kinds of poetry—*ghazals*, *masnavis*, *rubais* and *qasidas*.

### Bairam Khan

Bairam Khan<sup>13</sup> could compose verses both in Turki and Persian. He compiled a *diwan* containing verses in both these languages. Though a few in number, his poems touch the heart, and leave a lasting impression. Bairam patronized many a poet. It was under his patronage that Naziri Samarqandi took up the writing of *Shahnama-i-Humayun*.

### Akbar

Akbar's reign<sup>14</sup> marks a new epoch in India's literary history. The rapidly dwindling influence of Turki reached its final stage. The break with Turki was complete. It no longer enjoyed the patronage of the Emperor who hardly understood it. We find no Turkish work included in the inventory of books given by Abul Fazl, nor is there any recorded instance of his composing verses in Turki or even reciting one from the works of others. The same is true of the contemporary works of Badaoni, Nizam-ud-Din and a score of others.

Akbar was a great lover of Persian literature and himself composed verses. Abul Fazl writes: "The inspired nature of His Majesty is strongly drawn to the composing of Hindi and Persian poetry and is critical and hair-splitting in the niceties of poetic diction"

Here is a verse composed by Akbar:

نیست زنجیر جنون در گردن مجنون زار  
عشق دست دوستی در گرویش انگنده است

*In Majnun's neck is not a chain to restrain his madness:  
love hath put the arm of friendship round his neck.*

(Translation by Hadi Hasan)

On the assassination of Abul Fazl, the Emperor cried out in grief:

شیخ ما از شوق بجد چوں سوئے ما آمده  
ز اشتیاقِ پائے بوسی بے سرو پا آمده

*Our Shaykh comes to us  
with such intense fondness  
That he has literally prostrated  
himself in eternal service for us.*

Akbar also quoted verses from standard Persian poets and knew the *Diwan-i-Hafiz* by heart. Once a poet quoted the verse of Fighani:

سیما یار و خضرش همکاب و هم عنان عیسیٰ  
فغانی آفتاب من بدین اعزاز می آید

*With Messiah as comrade, Khizr as guide and Jesus  
riding by his side  
in such fashion comes my glorious sun, O Fighani.*  
Akbar at once corrected:

فغانی شه سوار من بدین اعزاز می آید

*In such fashion comes my glorious horseman, O Fighani*

Akbar's patronage attracted a galaxy of poets and scholars from far and wide. Shibli Nuamani, author of *Sher-ul-Ajam*, gives a list of 51 poets who were attached to the court.<sup>15</sup> Most of them had migrated to India from Persia. Sprenger gives a still longer list.<sup>16</sup> Abul Fazl informs us that "thousands of poets are commonly at the court and many among them have compiled a *diwan* or have written a *masnavi*." He mentions the best among them numbering 59,<sup>17</sup> while *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*<sup>18</sup> gives a list of 81 and Badaoni<sup>19</sup> enumerates no less than 168 poets.

### Ghazali

Mulla Ghazali Mashhadi (c. 974-980 A.H.)<sup>20</sup> was the first *Malik-ul-Shoara* or poet-laureate of the great Mughals. He was reputed for his great talent and unrivalled poetic expression.

He composed several *masnavis* of which *Mashhad-i-Anwar*, *Mirat-ut-Safat* and *Naqsh-i-Badi* are well known. Khan Zaman enjoyed the latter work so much that he gave ten thousand gold *mohrs* to the poet. A copy of his *diwan* called *Asar-ul-Shahab* is available in the Asiatic Society of Bengal Library. *Mirat-ul-ulam* mentions two books written by him, namely *Asrar-i-Maktum* and *Rashhat-ul-Hayat* to which *Haft Aqlim* adds a third: *Mirat-ul-Kainat*. Badaoni and the *Mirat* estimate his verses at 40 to 50 thousands, *Haft-Aqlim* at 70,000 and *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* at 100,000. Here is a verse by Ghazali :

مے غزالی گریم از یارے نہ اگر بد کنم نگو گوید  
من دآن سادہ دل کہ عیب مرا بہ بچو آئینہ روبرو گوید

O Ghazali, I avoid the friend who speaks well of the evil I do ;

I prefer the simple-hearted fellow who, like a mirror, reveals my faults to me.

### Faizi

Shaikh Abul Faizi (A.D. 1547-1595)<sup>21</sup> is by common consent among the three greatest Persian poets of the century, the others being Baba Fighani and Urfi of Shiraz. He represents a synthesis of the Iranian and Indian poetical traditions. According to Shibli Nuamani, he was "one of the two Indian poets who wrote Persian which would pass as the work of a genuine Persian." Saib, the greatest poet of Shahjahan's reign, calls him *Shirin Kalam*. Gibb, in his *History of Ottoman Poetry*, says that "after Jami, Urfi and Fayzi were the chief Persian influences on Turkish poetry until they were superseded by Saib." The title of *Malik-ul-Shoara* was conferred on him after Ghazali.

He composed a *diwan* entitled *Tabashir-us-Subh* which consisted of *qasidas*, *ghazals*, *tarik bands*, elegies, *qitas*, quatrains, etc. The first edition of this *diwan* contained about 6,000 verses ; the second was enlarged, and it consisted of 9,000 verses. The third edition, containing 12,000 verses, was perhaps compiled after Faizi's death. Faizi also took up the composition of *khamseh*, the five poems being *Markaz-ul-Adwar* written after the style of Nizami's *Makhzan-ul-Asrar*, *Sulaiman-*



*o-Bilqis* to correspond to Nizami's *Shirin-u-Khusrau*, *Nal-Daman* of 4,000 verses in imitation of *Laila-Majnun*, *Haft-Kishwar* in imitation of *Haft Paikar*, and *Akbar-Nama*, but the last two works remained incomplete. He also composed a *masnavi* on the conquest of Ahmedabad by Akbar in 1573 A.D. and entitled it *Zafarnama-i-Ahmedabad*.

Faizi's poetry, mostly lyrical, is tinged with mysticism and abounds in philosophical ideas. He introduced historical material which helped to widen its scope. There is emotion and strength in his poetry. He rightly says :

این بادہ کہ جوشد از ایام غم  
خونے ست چکبدره از دماغم

*This wine that bubbles forth from my cup  
Is in fact the very blood welled up from intellect.*

Even Badaoni, his bitterest critic, could not help praising Faizi for his remarkable composition of *Nal-Daman*. According to him,

والحق مشنوی است کہ دریں صد سال مثل آن بعد از  
امیر خسرو شاید در ہند کے دیگر گفتہ باشد

(This is in fact, a *masnavi*, the like of which has hardly been written all these hundred years following Amir Khusrau.)

On the death of his 3-year-old child, Faizi says :

اے روشنی ویدہ روشن چگونہ ؟ من بے تو تیرہ روز تو نے من چگونہ  
ما تم مراست خانہ من در فراق تو تو زیر خاک ساختہ سخن چگونہ

*O light of my bright eyes, how art thou ?  
Without thee my days are dark, without me how art thou ?  
My house is a house of mourning in your absence  
Thou hath made thou abode beneath the dust, how art thou ?*

#### Urfi Shirazi

Maulana Jamal-ud-Din Muhammad "Urfi" (A.D. 1556-1591)<sup>22</sup> is "probably on the whole the most famous and popular

poet of his century." Badaoni concurs with this view and adds that "there is no market, nor street where booksellers do not stand holding in their hands poetic collections of Urfi. The people of Iraq and India buy them as a token of blessing."

Urfi had attached himself to Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan after the death of his former patron, Hakim Abul Fath. His fame rests chiefly on *qasidas*. Important features of his poetry, according to Shibli, are forceful diction, new and original combination of words, fine metaphors and similes, lofty thoughts and vigorous themes. Faizi praises him for the sweetness of words, rapidity of thoughts, and minuteness of observations.

Urfi's *diwan* comprising 26 *qasidas*, 270 *ghazals* and 700 *qitas* and quatrains was compiled in 1598 A.D. According to Shibli, there were 14,000 verses in his *diwan*. His first *diwan*, consisting of 6,000 couplets, was lost.

Besides a *diwan*, Urfi's works include a number of treatises called the *Nafsiyya* dealing with mysticism, a short *masnavi* in imitation of Nizami's *Makhzan-ul-Asrar* and another in imitation of *Khusrau-wa-Shirin* of Nizami.

In spite of his undoubted talents, Urfi was not able to gain favour in higher circles due to his intolerable conceit and arrogance.

### **Rahim Khan-i-Khanan**

Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan<sup>23</sup> wrote under the pen-name of Rahim. According to Shibli Nuamani, he would have competed with Urfi and Naziri, had he devoted himself to poetry. Abul Fazl writes that he was a versatile man who composed verses in Persian, Arabic, Turki, Sanskrit and Hindi.

Khan-i-Khanan was famous for his patronage of men of letters not only in India but also in Iran and even in Turkistan. Many Persian poets, such as Rasmi Qalandar and Kausari, paid him compliments even in the face of Shah Abbas of Persia. Kausari said that among the aesthetes of the age, there was no such purchaser of words as Khan-i-Khanan. Urfi, Shakibi, Hayati, Rasmi, Naui, Sanai, Kafavi and even Naziri, Zuhuri, Qummi, and Kahi received handsome rewards for their

poetic talents from Khan-i-Khanan. He got Naui Shirazi weighed in gold. When Naziri desired to see a heap of one lakh silver coins, Khan-i-Khanan not only arranged such a heap but also sent the money to him.

### Zuhuri

Mulla Nur-ud-Din Zuhuri (died 1616 A.D.),<sup>24</sup> the court poet of Ibrahim Adil Shah of Bijapur, has been highly praised by Saib and Ghalib. He has been hailed as a saviour who gave a "new foundation to the dilapidated structure of the old style of prose and poetry and saved it from total collapse." He played an important role in bringing about a literary revival in India and as such occupies a high place both among its contemporaries and earlier writers. Faizi calls him "an extremely elegant poet." Zuhuri's works are marked by imagination and subtleties which he created by giving figurative touch to his composition.

Zuhuri was a great stylist. Although it is not easy to understand his writings, Ali Quli Walih Daghistani (author of *Riyaz-us-Shoara*) calls him, "a master of language like of whom not seen or heard of." Saib, the great Persian poet, pays him the following tribute:

صائبِ نداشتیم سرو برگِ این غزل  
 این فیض از کلامِ ظہوری بہ ما رسید

*Saib, we were rather aliens to the ornate style of ghazal  
 And it is, indeed, Zuhuri whom we all owe our knowledge-  
 ability in the genre.*

Among the poetical works of Zuhuri are *Saqi-Nama* in praise of Burhan Nizam Shah, a *masnavi* and *kulliyat* or a *diwan* comprising *qasidas*, *masnavis* and *rubais* totalling 417 folios of large foolscap size. The manuscript of the *diwan* is available in the Rampur State Library. It is said that Burhan Shah was so much pleased with his *Saqi-Nama* that he sent to the poet a reward of several elephants loaded with gold, silver and other presents. Zuhuri was sitting in a coffee house at that

time, smoking tobacco. He distributed the whole amount there and then, and wrote back:

تسلیم کردند - تسلیم کردم

*They surrendered and I surrendered.*

### Qummi

Mulla Qummi (died 1615 A.D.)<sup>25</sup> produced some of his finest works under the patronage of Murtaza Nizam Shah (1565-86 A.D.). He is the author of several *masnavis* as *Asrar-i-Aimma*, *Manba-ul-Anhar*, a *masnavi* divided into 17 *nahrs*, a mystical *masnavi* in the style of Sanai's *Hadiqa*, another nameless *masnavi* besides a bulky *diwan* of poems.

Abu Talib Kalim, the poet-laureate of Shahjahan's court, pays tribute to Malik Qummi by acknowledging him the king of kings of the realm of ideas, and the chief of the masters of speech. Iskander Munshi, the famous author of the *Alamara-i-Abbasi* calls both Zuhuri and Malik Qummi "Iustre of the poets of the age and distinguished among their contemporaries." There is an elegance and polished force and vigour of expression, skill in the technique of versification, spontaneity and sincerity of utterances which mark the poetical works of Qummi. His *Saqi-Nama* is a piece of unpassioned utterance. It is surcharged with lyricism and subjectivity and is knit up into a perfect literary piece of artistic effect.

### Naziri

Muhammad Husain Naziri of Nishapur (d. 1612 A.D.),<sup>26</sup> the chief lyric poet at the time of Akbar, flourished under the patronage of Khan-i-Khanan. He wrote *qasidas* in praise of Akbar, Jahangir, Murad and Khan-i-Khanan. Jahangir rewarded him with a robe of honour and a purse of one thousand rupees when he recited a *qasida* on his coronation. But it is in the sphere of *ghazals* that he gained celebrity. According to Ghani, the chief merits of his *ghazals* are : the use of simple, sweet and colloquial words; the coining of new words and suggestive compositions; and consistency in thought and expression. Like a clever painter, he gives a lively touch to love, its joys and

passions, grief and happiness. Saib, the poet-laureate at the court of Iran, says in one of his verses that he could not compete with Naziri. He preferred Naziri to Urfi.

صائب چه خیال ست شوی همچو نظیری  
عرفی به نظیری نہ رسانید سخن را

*What is this wild idea, O Saib, of becoming Naziri? Even Urfi could not compete with Naziri in poetry.*

Naziri, who was eager to visit Mecca, wrote to his patron Khan-i-Khanan:

ہمہ عیشیں ایں جہانے بہ عنایت تو دیدم  
چہ عجب اگر بیابم ز تو زاد آں جہانے

*Through thy beneficence I have enjoyed all the pleasures of this world.*

*What wonder if through thee, I should (also) obtain provision for the other world.*

Khan-i-Khanan provided him with the money.

Saib, Mirza Jalal Asir, a poet of the later period, and Mirza Ghalib all have praised Naziri for his wonderful odes. He was a man of orthodox views and sometimes wrote verses attacking "the heretic Abul Fazl."

#### Jahangir and Nurjahan

Jahangir<sup>27</sup> was a gifted poet. Like Babar's memoirs, his autobiography *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* is full of quotations from the classical poets and gives specimens of the Emperor's own poetry. The Emperor's love of wine is well known. He refers to it in one of his verses :

ساغرے بر رخ گلزار می باید کشید  
ابر بسیار ستے بسیار می باید کشید

*The cup of wine is enjoyed best amidst vegetation,*

*And the dense clouds above call for wine galore.*

Here is another verse by Jahangir :

دل بد ملکن کہ عمر نما ند بہ بیج کسی  
ایں یک نفس کہ خوش گذرد بس غنیمت است

Numerous poetic exchanges have been recorded between Jahangir and Nurjahan, though contemporary authorities are silent on this point. For example, expressing the intensity of his love, Jahangir once said :

بلبل نیتم کہ نعرہ کنم درد سردم  
پروانه ام کہ سوزم و دم برنیا درم

*I am not the nightingale to fill the air with my plaintive cries ;*

*I am a moth that dies without uttering a single moan.*

Nurjahan replied :

پروانه من نیتم کہ بیک شعله جان دهم  
شمع کہ شب بسوزم و دم برنیا درم

*I am not the moth that burns itself instantaneously;*

*I suffer a lingering death like the candle which burns through the night without a murmur.*

Once Jahangir said :

چسراخم گشته میگردند پیران جهان دیده

*Why do old and experienced people go about with their backs bent ?*

Nurjahan at once replied :

## بزرگ خاکی میجویند ایام جوانی را

*They are searching for the days of their youth under dust.*

Jahangir was greatly fond of rhymed *ghazals* and could judge the merits and demerits of a poem. According to Maulana Shibli Naumani, "his was the last word on a poetical composition."

### Talib Amuli

Talib Amuli (d. 1627 A.D.)<sup>28</sup> was the greatest poet of Jahangir's court. The title of poet-laureate was conferred on him in 1619 A.D. when he was only 20 years old. He was well versed in all forms of poetry, but his chief claim lies in *ghazal*-writing. He was highly esteemed in India for his marvellous ingenuity and fertility in the invention of fresh and picturesque similes and metaphors, some of them very sweet and delicate. Simplicity and clarity are the chief features of his poetry. "His style is natural and far removed from the highly coloured artifices of his contemporaries." (*A Dictionary of Oriental Literature*, Vol. II, p. 153, published by Vikas).

He began composing verses when he was only 12 years old. Shibli says that he could compose 50 to 60 verses in two or three hours. His famous *qasida* of 50 to 60 verses in praise of Jahangir was composed in one night.

In the following verses he refers to his proposed visit to India.

طائب! گل ایں چین بہ بستاں بگزار  
بگزار کہ می شوی، پشیمان بگزار  
ہندو نہ برو تحفہ کسی جانب ہند  
بخت سیہ خویش بہ ایراں بگزار

(He says that one should not take a black thing to India. Therefore, black luck should be left in Persia itself.)

After his initial failure in India, he went to Qandhar to seek service under Ghazi Khan, the governor. In touching verses he gives expression to his feelings on leaving Lahore and Delhi. About Lahore he says :

گمانم نیست کاندر سفت کشور : بود شهر بے آب و تاب لاہور  
 سکندر گو کہ عمر خضر یابد : ز آب، همچو شہد ناب لاہور  
 کہ گر یک خضر آب زندگی داشت : ہزاران خضر دارد آب لاہور  
 خدایا زندہ جاوید داشش : بہ آب خضرینی آب لاہور

Talib was a great favourite of Itmad-ud-Dawlah, who made him Keeper of the Seal. It was a respectable post. But Talib was born only for poetry. As he performed his duties carelessly, many irregularities were committed by him, and he was ashamed of his conduct. Ultimately, he presented a *qasida* to his patron, requesting him to relieve him of his duties. He says :

منت بندہ دا عذار قدیم : بخادم کنوں ہر خودی سپاری  
 چو میر تو دارم چہ حاجت بہم : مرا جہرداری بہ از جہرداری

*I am thy old and trusted servant ; and now thou art entrusting me with thy seal.*

*When I have thy love, do I need thy seal ?*

*Better far to have thy mihr (love) than to have thy muhr (seal).*

(Translation by Hadi Hasan)

Once, under the influence of liquor, Jahangir ordered that his favourites and intimate friends should attend his *bazm* (assembly) clean-shaven. Talib did not obey this order, and wrote to the Emperor :



بهشت است بزم تو و در بهشت چه صفا تراشیده را راه نیست

*Thy bazm is a paradise ; and I, an unshaved fellow, have no place in it.*

A few other selected verses by Talib Amuli :

دشنام خلق را اندهم جز دعا جواب بدم که تلخ گیرم و شیرین عوض دهم

*To the abuses hurled at me I reply with blessings. I am like a cloud which takes up salt water (or bitter water) and returns sweet water.*

مزه در جہاں نمی بینم : دہر گوئی دہان بیمار است

*The world is an insipid place. It is, thou wouldst say, the mouth of a patient.*

مرد بے برگ و نوا را بک از جاک بگیرند کوزه بے دستہ چوبینی بدو دستش بردار

*A helpless person should be attended to immediately. A pitcher having a broken handle should be lifted with both hands.*

#### Shahjahan and Mumtaz Mahal

Though Shahjahan's main interest was in architecture and he left a number of magnificent buildings including the world famous Taj Mahal for the posterity to admire, he was a great patron of learning. Many a poet flourished during his time.

Shahjahan is also said to have composed verses. Hadi Hasan has quoted some of these verses in his works *Mughal Poetry : Its Cultural and Historical Value* and *A Golden Treasury of Persian Poetry*.

Shahjahan and Mumtaz Mahal were once watching the River Jamuna from their palace. The water of the river leapt and foamed on the stones below. To pay tribute to his wife, the Emperor said:

آب از ہوائے روئے قومی آید از فرسنگها

*To see the lustre of thy face the river cometh all this way.*

Mumataz Mahal replied :

زحیت شاہ جہاں سرمیزند بر سنگها

*And because of the awe of the king of the world (i.e. Shahjahan) it dasheth its head against the stones.*

The duty to awake Shahjahan from sleep was entrusted to a maid-servant of Mumtaz Mahal. Once misjudging the time, she awoke the Emperor before dawn. Shahjahan lost his temper. He said to Mumataz Mahal :

سرمیدن لازم است

*Her head (the maid-servant's) must be chopped off.*

Mumtaz Mahal replied :

سرمیدن لازم است آن مرغ بے ہنگام را  
ایں پری پیکر چہ داند وقت صبح و شام را

*The head of that bird should be chopped off which has sung before its time, for what does this fairy-creature know of dawn or dusk ?*

#### Qudsi

A native of Mashhad, Haji Mohd Jan Qudsi (died 1646 A.D.)<sup>29</sup> came to India after finishing his education in Mecca and Madina, and attained the coveted position of poet-laureate after the death of Talib Amuli. Shahjahan once honoured Qudsi by filling seven times his mouth with jewels as a reward for his verses. He was weighed against silver in 1045 A.H. for a *qasida*. Inside the famous Peacock Throne were inscribed in enamel Qudsi's 20 verses by Shahjahan's order. Hadi Hasan

quotes them in full along with their English translation in his work, *Mughal Poetry : its Cultural and Historical Value*.

زیبے فرخنده تخت پادشاہی  
 کہ شد سامان بتائید اہل  
 فلک روزے کہ میگردش مکمل  
 زیر خورشید را بگذاخت اول

*Hail the auspicious throne of the King, completed by the grace of God !*

*For its construction, Heaven melted, first of all, the gold of the sun.*

بحکم کار فرما صفت شد پاک  
 بمینا کار لیش مینائے افلاک  
 جز این تخت از زر و گوهر چه مقصود  
 وجود بحر و کان را حکمت این بود

*By the Emperor's order, the blue of the sky went to the enamelling of the throne. Of what use are jewels and gold save to embellish this throne ? For this purpose were the sea and the mine created.*

Qudsi contributed much to Persian poetry by composing *qasidas* and *ghazals* of a lofty nature. His poetry, however, lacks the depth of Faizi.

He wrote a *masnavi* on the exploits of Shahjahan. It was later on completed by Kalim. He was also greatly fascinated by the Valley of Kashmir and wrote a poem beginning—

خوشا کشمیر و خاک پاک کشمیر  
 کہ سریر ز دہشت از خاک کشمیر  
 سوادش سرمہ چشم بہار است  
 بدہشت وجوئے شیرش آب لاراست

**Talib Kalim**

Abu Talib Kalim (died 1651 A.D.),<sup>30</sup> born at Hamadan, lived mostly at Kashan before he migrated to India where he became poet-laureate at the court of Shahjahan after the death of Qudsi in 1046 A.H. Shibli discusses his poetical achievements at some length in *Sher-ul-Ajam*. On one occasion the Sultan of Turkey wrote a letter to Shahjahan reproaching him for his title *Shahjahan* or "King of the World," when in reality he was only the "King of Hind." Shahjahan seemed to agree with the views of the Sultan of Turkey and in fact consulted Zamin-ul-Daulah for an alternative title. Kalim's ready wit came to the rescue of the Emperor. The poet explained :

ہندو جہاں زرد تے عددو ہردو چون یکست  
شہ را خطاب شاہجہانی میرھن است

*Since both Hind (India) and Jahan (World) are numerically identical, the right of the King to be called "King of the World" (and not merely King of India) is demonstrated.*

Kalim wrote a beautiful poem on Shahjahan's second coronation on the Peacock Throne. For his 63 couplets he received six gold pieces per couplet. Novelty of topics, original conceits and aptness of illustrations are the chief merits of his poetry. According to Browne, he resembled the more famous Saib in this respect.

Kalim wrote all forms of poetry—*qasidas*, *masnavis* and *ghazals*. His *masnavis* described the buildings erected by Shahjahan, besides mentioning some of the important events of his rule. He also completed the epic poem *Padshah-Nama* commenced by Qudsi describing the exploits of Shahjahan.

As a man, he was of most amiable disposition. He was not jealous of his contemporary poets and writers, and had special affection for Saib and Mir Masum.

He loved the valley of Kashmir where he migrated, and lived there till his death in 1651 A.D. He lies buried at the *Mazar-i-Shoara* in Kashmir along with Qudsi Mashhadi and Mohsin Fani of Kashmir.

**Saib**

Mirza Muhammad Ali Saib<sup>31</sup> of Tabriz (died 1677-78 A.D.) is by common consent the greatest of the Iranian poets of the 17th century. Shibli, his admirer, says that the Persian poetry which began with Rudaki ended with Saib. He considers him "superior in originality to Qaani of Persia, the greatest and the most famous of the moderns." On the other hand, Riza Quli Khan, author of *Majama-ul-Fusaha*, does not rank him so high, and says: "He has a strange method in the poets' path which is not now admired." Thus, he is one of those Persian poets who were "esteemed in India and Turkey but who were not honoured in their own country."

Saib visited India in 1629-30 A.D. and stayed here for two years. He enjoyed the patronage of Shahajahan and Zafar Khan, Governor of Kashmir. The former conferred upon him the title of *Mustaid Khan*. On his return to Isfahan he became poet-laureate of Shah Abbas. He, however, annoyed his successor, Sulaiman, and lived a quiet life until his death in 1678 A.D.

Except Kalim, no other poet of that period could rival Saib. He was known for his originality and the simplicity of his style. Here is a verse from one of his poems:

دور دوستان را یہ احسان یاد کردن ہمت است  
در نہ ہر نخل بیستے خود مثر می افکند

*It is highly magnanimous to remember friends distantly placed,*

*Else, every tree drops its fruit down to its own feet.*

His *diwan* is said to have a poetic collection of 100,000 verses. A manuscript copy of it exists in Hyderabad. Saib was also an anthologist and collected the best verses of his predecessors, both ancient and modern. His *bayaz* contains a wonderful collection of poems, and favourably compares with the well-known compilation of the great Arabic poet Abu Tammam. Shibli had a manuscript copy of this *bayaz* in his library.

Like Kalim, Saib was generous in his praise of Persian poets—Faizi, Zuhuri, Qummi, Naziri, Shakibi, Talib Amuli, Nawai and others. He was a great admirer of Naziri, whom he ranks not only above himself but also above Urfi. He was a great admirer of Hafiz also. He praises Faizi thus :

ایں آن غزل کہ فیضی شیریں کلام گفت  
در دیده ام خلیده و در دل نشسته

*It is this ghazal of Faizi that shows his lucid style at its best and which strikes both the eye and the heart alike.*

#### Brahman Lahori

Chandra Bhan "Brahman" (died 1662 A.D.)<sup>32</sup> flourished during the reign of Shahjahan, who honoured him with the title of *Rai*. He was a favourite of Prince Dara Shikoh, who appointed him his chief scribe. After the execution of Dara, Brahman was able to win Aurangzeb's favour, but after some time he retired and lived in seclusion till his death in 1662.

Brahman was greatly impressed by Islamic culture and he imbibed its best features. He was at the same time a devout Hindu.

خود لیت بکفر آشنا که چندین بار به کعبه بردم و بازش برین آوردم

*I possess the heart of an infidel.  
Many a time I took it to Kaba  
but brought it back a Brahman.*

He was a talented poet. His *diwan* consisting of *ghazals* and *quatrains* is regarded as a valuable contribution to Persian literature. His verses are clear and pure like those of the classical poets. Some of his *ghazals* are adorned with rhetorical artifices and are written in flowery and ornate Persian. His compositions frequently contain novel comparisons and similes:

عمر اگر ایں است چوں بادِ صبا خواہد گزشت  
 از ہمہ بیگانہ ترا ایں آشنا خواہد گزشت  
 بوی دردِ آشنائی زندہ می دارد مرا  
 ہر کہ با درد آشنا شد از دوا خواہد گزشت

Saib honoured Brahman by including some of his verses in his *bayaz*. Most of his *ghazals* are based "on Vedantic philosophy and strike a very high note of rhetoric and mysticism." His letters have been written in an elegant style. For a critical review of his work, reference may be made to *Gulzar-i-Bahar* or *Bazam-i-Nazm Brahman* (Urdu), edited by Bhagwant Rai.

#### Dara Shikoh

Dara Shikoh,<sup>33</sup> the eldest son of Shahjahan, was not only an author of repute but also a poet of considerable merit. He wrote under the nom de plume of *Qadiri*. Mullah Shah, his spiritual guide and a gifted poet, acknowledges the prince's poetical genius and describes his verses as "incomparable and pleasing." The author of *Khazinat-ul-Asafiya* (written in 1280 A.H.) corroborates the above view and recommends his *ghazals* as excellent. He adds: "His poetry is like the ocean of unitarianism flowing out of his pearl-scattering tongue like the sun of monotheism rising from the horizon in the manner of his luminous opening verse (*matla*)."<sup>34</sup> Without a discernible eye and intuition it would not be possible to comprehend Dara's compositions and grasp their sense. His flight of imagination is lofty. His poetry is important for the revival of Sufistic outlook in Persian poetry.

The author of *Khazinat-ul-Asafiya* has styled his *diwan* as *Aksir-i-Azam*, but it is popularly known as *Diwan-i-Dara Shikoh*. It contains 133 *ghazals* and 28 *rubaiyats* (quatrains). His style is prosaic and his poems lack lyrical touch and polite emotionalism. The language used is neither graceful nor polished. This is natural, for his poetry deals with philosophical Sufi and mystic themes. He composed in imitation of Jami,

who was his favourite. His verses clearly bring out his character, his dislike of narrow-minded *mullas* and his reverence for the saints. Some of his selected verses are as follows:

ندیدم در جہاں از کس وفائے بی وفا کردم بیدل دیدم جفائے  
شدم بیمار جز حق کسے نہ پرسید سوائے حق نہ دارم آشنائے

از گفتن توحید موعود نشوی بی شیریں نشود دھان ز نام شکر  
از مرگ نباشد اہل دل را آزار و ز خواب نترسد چو شود دل بیدار

#### Jahan Ara

Jahan Ara,<sup>34</sup> the talented daughter of Shahjahan, was not only a gifted poet but also a fine prose-writer. Her *Munis-ul-Arwah* is the biography of Khawaja Muin-ud-Din Chishti. Another well-known work of hers is *Sahabia*. It is the life history of her *Pir*, Mulla Shah Badakashi. She gives us the minutest details about his dress, food, etc. Mullah Shah, the spiritual teacher of Dara Shikoh and Jahan Ara Begam, wrote a commentary partly in Persian and partly in Arabic on *Surahs* (i-iii and xii) and named it *Shah-i-Tafsir*.

#### Aurangzeb's dislike of poetry

Aurangzeb<sup>35</sup> was devoid of all artistic tastes. He abolished the post of *Malik-ul-Shoara* and stopped stipends of many a poet.

It is however, surprising to find some of his *ruqqats* (letters) interspersed with verses of contemporary poets, and some of these are even ascribed to him. Rawlinson writes:

"Though an accomplished poet, Aurangzeb discouraged poetry on the ground that poets dealt in falsehood." It appears that the Emperor's liking for poetry increased with advancing years. Bernier makes a reference to it.

#### Bedil

Mirza Abdul Qadir "Bedil" of Patna (died 1721 A.D.)<sup>36</sup> was a reputed poet of the time of Aurangzeb and is said to have composed 90,000 verses. He wrote all forms of poetry excepting *qasida*. He never praised anybody and led an inde-



pendent life. For that he was respected by nobles like Nizam-ul-Mulk and Nawab Mir Shakar Ullah Khan. In *ghazal*-writing, he was without a rival in his age.

He was perhaps the first to introduce philosophical subtleties in his poetical compositions. He was a mystic poet and introduced spiritual and realistic themes in his poetry. He is esteemed in the Soviet Central Asia and Afghanistan.

His works include *Unsur*, a collection of prose and poetical writings; *Muhit-i-Azam*, a *masnavi*, on the lines of Zuhuri's *Saqi-Nama*, *Irfan*, another metaphysical *masnavi*, *Tur-i-Marafat*, dealing with natural occurrences, and a *masnavi*, *Tilism-i-Hairat*. His *diwan* was published by Nawal Kishore Press in 1865 A.D.

"Bedil brought the Indian style to its culmination in poetry, and this style is often linked with his name. It is a difficult style, with involved metaphors and intricate syntax, although the language is itself simple." (A *Dictionary of Oriental Literature*, Vol. III, p. 32).

### Kunjahi

Ghanimat Kunjahi (died 1695 A.D.)<sup>37</sup> had not the privilege to be associated with the literary circle in the Mughal darbar. In fact, he lived away from the capital. His *masnavi*, *Nairang-i-Ishq*, was not in conformity with the prevalent notions at the Mughal court. The *masnavi* throws light on the highly luxurious way of living in the time of Muhamad Shah. The striking features of his compositions are new and original similes, and metaphors, and an escapist view of life. "New traditions and terminology brought about search of new style and original thoughts and as a result, the style acquired a special appeal and delicacy in the presentation of lofty ideas and imagery."

### Zeb-un-Nisa

Zeb-un-Nisa, the cultured and scholarly daughter of Aurangzeb, was a mystic poet. It is said that she spent 20 years imprisoned in Salimgarh fort. She never liked the cold orthodoxy of her father and tried to weld Islam and Hinduism together. Her *diwan*, compiled 35 years after her death, contains many *ghazals* and *rubais*. Her poems show traces of *Sufi* pessimistic thinking and express the feelings of a suffering soul.

Some of the poems show a remarkable liberality of ideas. The poetess speaks of the temple and the mosque in the same breath and sometimes combines them both.

Here are a few selected verses by Zeb-un-Nisa :

An attendant said :

از قضا آئینه چینی شکست

*By chance the Chinese mirror is broken.*

Zeb-un-Nisa replied :

خوب شد، اسباب خود بینی شکست

*It is all right. An object of vanity is broken.*

اے آبشار نوہ گراز ہر کیستی پسر درنگوں نگدہ زانده چستی  
آیا چه درد بود که چون ماتم شب پسر بر زمین میزدی دیگرستی

*O waterfall, for whom dost thou mourn ? For whom dost thou hang thy head in grief ? What pain was it that, like me, thou didst dash thy head against the rocks all night and weep ?*

#### Nur-ud-Din

Mirza Nur-ud-Din Muhammad Ali<sup>38</sup> was famous for his satire and wit. He was granted the title of Danishmand Khan. The *Waqai* is the best known of his satirical compositions. His verses and *ghazals* are not excellent but his satire is pleasing and pungent. He is remembered and admired for his florid style, but sometimes he is very obscure and beyond the comprehension of the common reader. His *diwan* has been published besides *Husn-o-Ishq* in which he wrote in imitation of Fattahi's *Husn-o-Dil*.

#### Wali

Banwali Dass Wali (1680 A.D. - 1720 A.D.) was another poet of Aurangzeb's time. His *kulliyat* or complete works have been published with notes and translation of selected passages.

Mulla Bihishti Shirazi wrote *Ashobnama-i-Hindustan*, a historical *masnavi* on the war of succession between Shahjahan's

sons, from the rising of Murad Baksh in 1657 to the death of Dara Shikoh. The style of the book is exceedingly interesting and fluent. The language is simple. The author's poetic skill, especially in the description of clashes and battles, is of a very high order. He writes sometimes very boldly :

چرا کثر فتوحات ادرنگ زیب بسحر و فسون و مکر فریب  
قضا گر نمی رخت رنگ فریب شکست اوافاتر به بذر مگزیب

#### Nemat Khan

Nemat Khan "Ali" (died 1709 A.D.) was attached to the Mughal court. From the position of a *darogha* he rose to the post of treasury officer and was honoured with the title of Muqarrab Khan. Himself a Shia, he did not like Aurangzeb's victories over the Shia kingdoms of Golkunda and Bijapur. He also disliked the dry, severe and serene atmosphere of Aurangzeb's court and his lack of patronage of poetry. In his writings he ridiculed the victories of Aurangzeb and found fault with the army as well as the set-up of the government. With a discerning eye he pointed out the defects and inherent weaknesses in the system which were to become so very apparent after the death of Aurangzeb. He lamented the degradation in the national character. His *ghazals* are elevated and his description of events critical. A verse from him :

خود پرست است که این قوم بآں مشغول اند  
کس ندانست که اسلام چه معنی دارد

*This community is so deeply engrossed in selfishness that none has ever had time to know what Islam really means.*

#### Tek Chand

Among the Hindu poets of Persian, Tek Chand "Bahar" held a pre-eminent position. According to a biographer, "he wrote pleasing verses and his writings reached the highest pitch of excellence." He was a distinguished pupil of Siraj-ud-Din Ali Khan "Arzu."

**Khatri**

Wamiq Khatri, who subsequently embraced Islam, was greatly admired by Aurangzeb. He was master of sprightly style and the beauty, flavour and sweetness of his verses were greatly applauded. He gave up poetry later on at the suggestion of his patron, Aurangzeb, and devoted himself to serious branches of learning.

Jaswant Ray was another Hindu poet who composed a *diwan* in the later years of Aurangzeb's reign.

**NOTES**

1. For Babar's poetical attainments refer to *Babarnama*, II, p. 470; *Akbarnama*, I, pp. 118-19, Tr. I, pp. 278-78; *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, II, Tr., p. 40; Badaoni, I, 343; Tr. I, pp. 448-49; *Shama-i-Anjuman*, p. 78; *Indo-Iranica*, June 1963; Ghani, M.A., *A History of Persian Language and Literature at the Mughal Court*, I, p. 46; Hadi Hasan, *Mughal Poetry: Its Cultural and Historical Value*, p. 66; The *diwan* of Babar Padshah has been edited by Dension Ross (Calcutta 1910). According to Hadi Hasan, the genuine Persian verses of Babar are only 19.
2. For Atashi Qandhari refer to Badaoni, III, 180-81, Tr. III, 253-54. He is not mentioned in *Tabaqat* or *Ain*.
3. For Zain-nd-Din Wafai refer to Badaoni, I, 341-42, Tr. I, 448; *Ibid.* III, 471-77, Tr. III, 610-18.
4. For Mulla Shihab see A.S. Beveridge, *Memoirs of Babur*, p. 605, Badaoni, I, 342, Tr. I, 449; *A.N.*, I, 119, Tr. I, 280 (London, 1920).
5. For Baqai refer to Badaoni, I, 342. Tr. I, 449; *Akbarnama*, I, 119, Tr. 281.
6. For Humayun's poetical attainments, refer to *Akbar-nama*, I, 368, Tr. I, 665; *Qanun-i-Humayun*, 36, Tr. 26; *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, II, 138; *Islamic Culture*, Vol. XXV, Jubilee Number, pp. 212-276; Ghani, op. cit., II, pp. 10-26; Hadi Hasan, op. cit., p. 69.
7. For Kamran's poetry refer to Hadi Hasan. p. 69.

8. *Qanun-i-Humayun*, p. 42.
9. For Qasim Kahi refer to Badaoni, III, 242-48, Tr. III, 173-76; *Ain*, (Bloch), II, 55-62; Hadi Hasan, p. 8; *Diwan-i-Kahi* was published by Iran Society, Calcutta, in 1956.
10. For Maulana Janubi refer to Badaoni, I, 469-72, Tr. I, 605-609.
11. For Shah Tahir Dakhan refer to Badaoni, I, 483; Tr. I, 626; Ghani, op. cit., II, p. 70.
12. For Abul Wajid and Ayub refer to *Ibid*.
13. For Bairam Khan refer to Badaoni, I, 480, Tr. I, 622; *Armaghan-i-Pak*, p. 82.
14. For Akbar's poetical talents refer to *A.N.*, I, 271, Tr. I, p. 520; *Ain* (Bloch) Introduction xxvii; *Urafat-ul-Ashiqin*, Bankipore MS., f. 121b; Hadi Hasan, p. 73; Ghani, III, pp. 11-24.
15. *Sher-ul-Ajam*, III, pp. 4-5.
16. Sprenger, *Catalogue of the Library of the King of Oudh I*, pp. 55-56.
17. *Ain* (Bloch, Ed. 1939) pp. 617-680.
18. *T.A.*, Vol. II, pp. 484-520.
19. Badaoni, III, pp. 170-397; Tr. III, pp. 239-537.
20. For Ghazali Mashhadi refer to *Ain* (Bloch), pp. 617-18; Badaoni, III, 170-72, Tr. III, 239-42; *T.A.*, II (Trans.), 710-16; *Shama-i-Anjuman*, pp. 227-38; Hadi Hasan, *Mughal Poetry: Its Cultural and Historical Value*, p. 26; *Indo-Iranica*, June 1957, June 1963. For Ghazali's *diwan* see A.S.B. (674); Bodleian Library, 1033; British Museum (661-62).
21. For Faizi refer to *Ain* (Bloch), pp. 618-35; Badaoni, III, 299-310, Tr. III, 411-29; *T.A.* (Trans.), II, pp. 716-18; *Sher-ul-Ajam*, III, pp. 28-72; Ikram, *Armaghan-i-Pak* (Karachi 1959), pp. 91-117; *Shama-i-Anjuman*, pp. 316-64; Browne, E.G., *Literary History of Persia*, Vol. IV, pp. 163-67, 242-45; Ghani, M.A., *A History of Persian Language and Literature at the Mughal Court*, Allahabad, 1930, pp. 39-66; *Indo-Iranica*, June 1957, June 1963, September 1963; Hadi Hasan, op. cit., p. 26. Also see Gibb, *History of Ottoman Poetry*, I, pp. 5, 127, 129. For a copy of

- Faizi's *diwan* refer to Bankipore Library. The *diwan* was printed in Delhi in A.H. 1216 and also at Lahore but its copies are rare. For manuscript copies see British Museum, 450, 670; A.S.B., 692-93; Bankipore, 261-64. The copies of *Markaz-ul-Adwar* are available, as it was lithographed in 1831 at Calcutta and 1846 at Lucknow. Manuscript copies of it are in the British Museum (Add 6625) and Asiatic Society of Bengal (695). *Nal-Daman* has been lithographed in India. It has also been printed in Iran. A manuscript is available in Bodleian Library, Oxford and also in A.S.B. (696). In this connection also refer to Storey, II, Fasc III, p. 540 and *Oriental College Magazine* (Lahore), Vol. IV, No. 2 (Feb. 1928), p. 13.
22. For Urfi refer to *Ain* (Bloch), pp. 639-41; *T.A.* II (Trans.), 719-20; Badaoni, III, pp. 285-87, Tr. III, pp. 392-95; *Sher-ul-Ajam*, III, pp. 73-119; *Armaghan-i-Pak*, pp. 54-55; *Shama-i-Anjuman*, pp. 297-98. Browne, IV, op. cit. pp. 241-49; Ghani, III, op. cit., pp. 103-180; Hadi Hasan, op. cit., p. 4; *Indo-Iranica*, Sept. 1957, pp. 28-35; *Islamic Culture*, Jan. 1929. For *Diwan-i-Urfi* refer to India Office, 1451-1463, Bodleian, 1051-54, 1991; A.S.B.; 683, 684; Bankipore, 253-58, quoted in K.A. Nizami's "Persian Literature under Akbar," *Medieval India Quarterly*, Aligarh.
23. For Khan-i-Khanan refer to *Sher-ul-Ajam*, III, p. 14; Ghani, op. cit, III, pp. 220-29; Browne, op. cit., IV, pp. 165, 245, 252; *Indo-Iranica*, June 1963 June 1957, June 1962; Badaoni, III (Trans.), pp. 351, 393, 422n, 439n. 4, 473, 495, 508; *Ain* (Bloch), p. 565; *Maasir-i-Rahimi* (Vol. III) counts 106 panegyrists and proteges of Khan-i-Khanan. According to *Maasir* Khan-i-Khanan, gave Rs. 10,000 and Rs. 12,000 to Naui and Shakibi respectively for their *sagīnamas*, Rs. 80,000 to the latter again for his expenses for Haj, Rs. 12,000 to Anisi on the occasion of his marriage, one lakh silver coins to Naziri, and to many others he made generous contributions for their poetic talents.

- He got Naui Shirazi weighed in gold. But the account of *Maasir* is not always trustworthy.
24. For Zuhuri refer to Badaoni, III, 269-70, Tr. III, 372-73; *Ain* (Bloch), p. 680; *Armaghani-i-Pak*, pp. 121-27; Ghani, op. cit., III, pp. 181-218; Browne, op. cit., IV, pp. 250, 253, 268; *Indo-Iranica*, June 1957 and June 1963. The MS. copy of the *diwan* is in the Rampur State Library.
  25. For Mulla Qummi refer to Badaoni, III, pp. 332-34, Tr. III, 458-61; *Ain* (Bloch), p. 680; *Indo-Iranica*, June 1957; Sprenger's *Catalogue*, p. 482.
  26. For Naziri see *Armaghan-i-Pak*, pp. 58-59; Ghani, III, pp. 74-78; Browne, IV, p. 252; *Indo-Iranica*, June 1963, p. 76.
  27. For Jahangir's poetical attainments refer to *Tuzuki-i-Jahangiri* (Nawal Kishore Edition), pp. 235, 246, 237; *Sher-ul-Ajam*, III, pp. 15-52; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri* (Urdu), pp. 91, 308; Hadi Hasan, op. cit., pp. 76-77; *Shama-i-Anjuman*, p. 106.
  28. For Talib Amuli refer to *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri* (Urdu), pp. 91, 308; *Sher-ul-Ajam*, III, pp. 158, 166-67; *Armaghan-i-Pak*, p. 60; *Shama-i-Anjuman*, pp. 271-73; *Indo-Iranica*, June 1962; Browne, IV, pp. 253-56; Hadi Hasan, op. cit., pp. 33, 37, etc.
  29. Hadi Hasan, op. cit., pp. 27, 57-59; Lahori *Padshahnama*, I, Pt. II, pp. 80-81; *Armaghan-i-Pak*, pp. 63, 148-153; *Indo-Iranica*, June 1957, June 1963.
  30. For Kalim refer to *Sher-ul-Ajam*, III, pp. 184-206; *Armaghan-i-Pak*, pp. 63-64; *Shama-i-Anjuman*, pp. 272-73; Hadi Hasan, 57-58; Browne, IV, pp. 258-63; *Indo-Iranica*, June 1957, June 1963; For his versified *Padshahnama* see Rieu, ii, 686a and 686b. Storey, *Persian Literature*, Vol. II, Fasc iii, pp. 572-73.
  31. For Saib refer to *Sher-ul-Ajam*, III, 169-181; *Shama-i-Anjuman*, pp. 251-55; Browne, IV, op. cit., pp. 270-71; Hadi Hasan, op. cit., p. 27; *Indo-Iranica*,

June 1963, pp. 78-79.

32. For Brahman refer to *Gulzar-i-Bahar* or *Bazm-i-Nazm* edited by Bhagwant Rai, Delhi; *Armaghan-i-Pak*, p. 171; *Shama-i-Anjuman*, p. 92; *Indo-Iranica*, June 1962, pp. 14-15; *Islamic Culture*, April 1945, 115-22.
33. For Dara Shikoh refer to *Hasanat-i-Arifin*, MS. No. 553, Hyderabad State Library. The endorsement in the MS. calls it *Diwan-i-Dara Shikoh*. Letters of Dara Shikoh, *Indian Antiquary*, 1924; *Vishva Bharati Quarterly*, Vol. VI; *Ruqqat-i-Alamgiri*, Vol. I, Dar-ul Mussannifin, Azamgarh; *Islamic Culture*, XXV, pp. 52-72; Hadi Hasan, op. cit., pp. 77-78; JRASB, 1939, Vol. V, Art. 3; *Armaghan-i-Pak*, pp. 64-65, etc.
34. For Jahan Ara refer to *Oriental College Magazine* (Lahore), Vol. XIII, No. 4, August 1937. The MS. of *Sahabia* is in the Appa Rao Bhola Nath Library, Ahmedabad. For Badakashi refer to the *Oriental College Magazine*, op. cit; Sharma's *Bibliography*, pp. 86-87.
35. For Aurangzeb refer to *Maasir-i-Alamgiri* (text), pp. 532-33; M. Abdul Rahman, *Alamgir* (Urdu) p. 516; *Ruqqat-i-Alamgiri* (Trans. J.H. Billimoria), London, 1908; Bernier, *Travels* (1891), p. 401; Sarkar, J.N., *Studies in Mughal India*, p. 41; Rawlinson, *India* p. 371.
36. For Mirza Abdul Qadir Bedil refer to *Armaghan-i-Pak*, pp. 73-74, 194-201; *Shama-i-Anjuman*, pp. 82-83.
37. For Ghanimat Kunjahi refer to *Armaghan-i-Pak*, pp. 69-70, 178. For Nemat Ali refer to *Ibid*, pp. 71-72, 194.
38. For Mirza Nuruddin refer to Elliot and Dowson, *History of India as told by its own Historians*, VII, pp. 200-1; Storey, II, fasc. III, p. 590.



## Literature - II

### PROSE

The prose literature which developed in the Mughal court and in the contemporary courts of the Deccan carried on the tradition of the Persian prose of the Sultanate. Historiography was no doubt most enthusiastically cultivated, but there is hardly any other branch of literature—biographies, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, ethics, *belles-lettres*—which was not touched. However, there was a deterioration in the standard of prose not only in India, but also in contemporary Iran, especially after the advent of the Turks, Tatars and Mongols. Most of the works produced in India during the period were marked by verbosity and exaggeration. This was specially true of the official histories compiled during the period.

Badaoni in his *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh* refers to several works written by scholars in the times of Babar and Humayun. Only a few of these works are now extant and it is, therefore, not possible to know the merits of these treatises. Moreover, it is not always safe to ascribe them to a particular period. We may, however, take note of some of the important works.

To Abdul Wahid Bilgrami,<sup>1</sup> who probably flourished in the times of Humayun and Akbar, are ascribed *Jawaharnama-i-Humayun*, a work on the use of precious and other minerals, and *Sanbali*, a treatise on the technical terms of Sufism. Muslih-al-Din is said to have written a commentary in Persian on all Timurids, besides several Arabic works. Shah Tahir was a prolific writer both in Arabic and Persian. His letters, contained in a volume entitled *Insha-i-Shah Tahir*, deserve mention. S.K. Banerji mentions some of the works written during Humayun's time in his *Humayun Badshah*. But the real contribution in

Persian prose was made during the time of Akbar, who had a number of brilliant scholars at his court.

### AKBAR'S PERIOD

#### Abul Fazl and Faizi

Abul Fazl and Faizi were among the best prose writers of Akbar's time. Many scholarly works were produced by them. Abul Fazl's *Iyar-i-Danish*, based on the famous work *Panchatantra*<sup>2</sup>, and *Risala-i-Akhlaq* are among his well-known works. His letters written to kings, *amirs* and even ordinary people, collected by Abdus Samad, show his wonderful prose style. The collection is named *Insha-i-Abul Fazl* or sometimes *Mak-tubat-i-Allami*. His style as depicted in his works and letters is quite different from that of the *Akbar-Nama*. The language too is simple, though ornate sometimes. The letters are in accordance with the established usages, and are on the whole easy, graceful and sublime.

Faizi's marvellous commentary on the *Quran*, called *Sawatai-ul-Ilham*, contains no dotted letters.<sup>3</sup> *Insha-i-Faizi* or Faizi's letters to the Emperor and friends are of "gossiping familiar character and are embellished with plenty of verses." They throw light on the various aspects of the life of the people in those days. In these letters he has used Hindi words at certain places.

#### Badaoni

Badaoni, the famous historian, was a well-known author. He translated many Sanskrit works into Persian prose. *Tarikh-i-Kashmir* is ascribed to him. Another work, *Najat-al-Rashid*, described as a polemical work by Blochmann and a Sufico-ethical treatise by Ivanow, is richly interspersed with historical anecdotes and controversial discussions. It is written in fine and polished Persian, but the subject-matter is dry and uninteresting.

Abdul Haq Dehalvi, a well-known scholar, is said to be the author of not less than 101 works. Among his best-known works is *Akhabar-ul-Akhayar*, a collection of the biographies of saints, scholars and holy men of India. It was completed in 1590.

### Iahdad and Razi

Iahdad Faizi compiled a Persian dictionary in 1592-93 and named it *Madar-al-afazil*. The *Haft-Aqlim* of Amin Ahmad Razi, written in 1593-94, is a gazetteer of the world, including India. It gives a brief historical review of India and appends biographical notes on rulers, saints and scholars.<sup>4</sup> Krishan Das composed an encyclopaedia during the reign of Akbar.

### Other works of Akbar's time

Among other notable works of the period are *Nusakh-i-Jahanara* of Ahmad Ghaffari,<sup>5</sup> a treatise on customs and manners of people by Beg Mirza and Mulla Tabb,<sup>6</sup> a treatise on *Hadis* by Shihab-ud-din, Wafai's work on the circumstances of the conquest of Hindustan and explaining its wonders,<sup>7</sup> Talib of Isfahan's treatise on wonders of Tibet,<sup>8</sup> Puru Khotam's commentary on *Khirad-i-Afza*,<sup>9</sup> *Siyar-i-Nabawi*, a collection of traditions relating to the Prophet, *Munaqib-i-Ghausiya*, a biography of Muhammad Ghaus by Shah Fazl Shattari, and *Halat-i-Hazrat Balawal*, a biography of this saint of Mughal India by one of his disciples.<sup>10</sup> The only prose work of Mulla Nuruddin Zuhuri is *Seh Nasr* (or the three essays) which he wrote as a preface to the book of songs composed by Ibrahim Adil Shah.<sup>11</sup> Idraki Beg Lari Thattawi's *Belgar-Nama* is a biography of Khan-i-Zaman Amir or Shah Qasim Khan.<sup>12</sup>

## JAHANGIR'S PERIOD

### Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri

A king of highly refined tastes, Jahangir was the only Mughal ruler after Babar who wrote his memoirs. Instead of Turki, however, he used Persian. Unlike Babar, he did not consider himself to be a foreigner, but a native of the land of his birth. Jahangir as a true Indian "dwells delightfully on the charm of Indian flowerly, particularizes the *palas*, the *bokul* and the *champa* and avows that no fruit of Afghanistan or Central Asia is equal to the mango." His memoirs are "a priceless record of his reign and are distinguished by their frankness and lucidity. Besides the account of military and political transactions, the memoirs are rich in details about the social, cultural and spiritual life of this period and the keen observations of

Jahangir about men and matters.”<sup>13</sup> The Emperor himself wrote till the 17th year when they were continued under his supervision by Mutammad Khan.<sup>14</sup> This was done till the nineteenth year. They were finally re-edited in the reign of Muhammad Shah, and the account was brought up to the end of the reign of Jahangir.

*Guldasta-i-Faramin-i-Jahangiri* is an interesting collection of Jahangir's letters to Shahjahan when the latter was in rebellion against his father. *Farhang-i-Jahangiri*, a Persian dictionary, was compiled under the orders of the Emperor. The manuscript existed in the library of the Maharaja of Banaras.<sup>15</sup> *Akhlaq-i-Jahangiri* or a book of ethics was written by Abdul Wahab, and dedicated to Jahangir.

#### Maasir-i-Rahimi

*Maasir-i-Rahimi* by Muhammad Abdul Baqi is a biography of Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan, a great patron of learning. It includes accounts of all those scholars and poets who flourished under the Khan's patronage. *Haft-Aqlim* of Amin Razi is a detailed account of the poets of the age.<sup>16</sup> *Paighambar-Nama* is a metrical biography of Prophet Muhammad. Father Jerome Xavier is said to have written many works in Persian. His *Aina-i-Haqqnuma* (truth-reflecting mirror) on the Christian religion, its fundamentals, etc. was dedicated to Jahangir.<sup>17</sup> He also wrote in Persian a *History of Christ* in 1617 under Akbar's orders.<sup>18</sup> Allah Masih Panipati dedicated to Jahangir his abridged translation of the *Ramayana*.<sup>19</sup>

#### Commentaries

Nur-ul-Haq, son of Abdul Haq Dehalvi, wrote three Persian commentaries on *Sahih* of al Bukhari.<sup>20</sup> Nizam-al-Din Thanesari's commentary on *Surahs*, *Malfuz-i-Shaikh Nizam-al-Din Thanesari* and *Sharh-i-Lamaat* are well known.<sup>21</sup>

### SHAHJAHAN'S PERIOD

Many prose works of great value were produced during Shahjahan's period. The story of the adventures of Prince Wala Akhtar of Hurmuz was composed by Munir in an ornate and flowery style.<sup>22</sup> Several works were produced by Mulla

Tughrai, such as *Firdausiya* in praise of the valley of Srinagar, *Kanz-al-Maani* and *Taj-al-Madaih* in praise of the princes Shah Shuja and Murad respectively. Sadiq Dehalvi was the reputed author of many works including *Tabaqat-i-Shahjahani*<sup>23</sup> and *Asar-i-Shahjahani*. A revised edition of *Malfuzat-i-Timuri* was brought out by Muhammad Afzal in 1640.

#### **Chandra Bhan Brahman's books**

Chandra Bhan was a famous writer in Persian. His books were used as text-books for advanced study. Besides a *diwan*, his books include *Guldasta*, *Chahar Chaman*, *Tuhfat-al-Anwar*, *Karnama*, *Tuhfat-al-Fusahi*, and *Majma-al-Fuqaias*.<sup>24</sup> *Chahar Chaman*, written soon after 1647 and divided into four main chapters, gives a detailed description of the festivals at the court, the daily occupation of Shahjahan, the author's life and his letters, and the last chapter deals with moral and religious matters.<sup>25</sup> The book is a fine example of Indianised Persian. Innayat Allah was the author of a book of tales entitled *Bahar-i-Danish*, completed in 1651.

#### **Dabistan-i-Mazahib**

A remarkable religious work of the period *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*<sup>26</sup> attempts to give an account of the various sects of Zoroastrianism, the philosophical school of Hindus, and the teachings of Buddhists, Jews, Christians, and Muhammadan sects. Sir William Jones observes : "The rare and interesting tract entitled *Dabistan* on 12 different religions was composed by a Muhammadan traveller, a native of Kashmir named Mohsani (of Fani) but distinguished by the assumed surname of Fani."<sup>27</sup> *Tabaqat-i-Shahjahani* by Muhammad Sadiq takes brief note of the great and distinguished men of the reign of Shahjahan.

#### **Lexicographies**

One of the chief characteristics of the Persian prose literature was the growth and development of lexicography during this period. Under the patronage of the Mughal emperors and the rulers of the Deccan, Indian scholars devoted themselves to the compilation of Persian dictionaries. And as

Dr. Ali Asghar Hekmat in *Glimpses of Persian Literature* says, "In a short time the number of dictionaries compiled in India exceeded those produced earlier in Iran. Their superiority has been such that even today students and scholars refer to them for the solution of their difficulties." *Farhang-i-Jahangiri* was completed in A.D. 1608-9 by Jamal-ud-Din Husayn Inju and dedicated to Jahangir.

*Farhang-i-Rashidi* by Abdur Rashid, completed in A.D. 1654, forms the basis of the famous Persian-English dictionary of Steingass. *Muntakhab-al-Lughat-i-Shahjahani* was also prepared by the same author. *Shahid-i-Sadiq* was a voluminous encyclopaedia prepared during Shahjahan's reign. It took three years (1644-47) to collect the material on religious, philosophical, political, ethical and other allied subjects. The work, which was dedicated to Shah Shuja, contains extracts, proverbs, anecdotes, etc., arranged under innumerable subject-headings. According to Professor S.R. Sharma, "Two glossaries of equivalents in Persian and Sanskrit, one of astrological data and another of terms in the Vedanta and Sufism were also prepared."<sup>28</sup> *Burhan-i-Qate* was completed in A.D. 1652 by Muhammad Husayn. *Farhang-i-Anandraj* by Muhammad Badshah and *Farhang-i-Nizam* by Sayyid Muhammad Ali also belong to this period.

### Dara Shikoh's contribution

Dara Shikoh was a master of Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit and author and translator of several well-known works. His *Safinat-al-Auliya* or the lives of Muslim saints "breathes noble sentiments, bearing testimony to his wide reading particularly in Sufi literature." *Sakinat-al-Auliya*, another work by him, deals with the various modes of Qadiri order and the life of Mian Mir. *Risala-i-Haqqnuma*, a faithful mirror of Dara's character, shows that the author held the Sunni faith as propounded by the theologian Imam Abu Hanifa.<sup>29</sup> It is a primer for the beginners in the path of Sufism. *Majma-al-Bahrain*, a comparative study of Hinduism and Islam, *Hasanat-al-Arifin*, an answer to public criticism of his Sufistic views, and *Tariqat-al-Haqiqat* are some of his well-known works besides some others of which we have no record.

### Bahar-i-Ajam

Tek Chand Bahar, the distinguished pupil of Siraj-ud-din Ali Khan Arzu, was the celebrated author of *Bahar-i-Ajam*, a well-known dictionary, and a book on philosophy, besides a commentary on Sadi's *Bostan* and *Bahar-i-Bostan*.<sup>30</sup>

## AURANGZEB'S PERIOD

Aurangzeb was master of Persian prose. His letters are of great literary value. Full of quotations from sacred scriptures and instructive passages from well-known Persian poets,<sup>31</sup> sometimes interspersed with verses of his own, his letters written in simple language mark him out as one of the greatest Persian prose writers of his time. We shall take note of it separately.

### Manuals and Encyclopaedias

*Uqul-i-Ishara*, a scientific encyclopaedia, was compiled by Maulana Barari in 1673-74.<sup>32</sup> *Tuhfat-ul-Hind* by Mirza Khan is a manual of Indian literary studies. It includes discussions on various important topics, such as prosody, similes, music, astrology, etc. Maidnimal, a Kayastha, wrote an excellent work based on *Lilawati* in the third year of Aurangzeb's reign.<sup>33</sup> *Dastur-i-Jahan Kusha* by Khair Ullah, completed in the 9th year of Aurangzeb's reign, deals with the duties of ministers and army commanders. *Dastur-al-Amal* describes revenues of different provinces, rules and regulations for assessment, collection, etc., and is very useful. *Farhang-i-Kardani* by Jagat Rai deals with the revenues of Aurangzeb's reign.

### Fatwa-i-Alamgiri and other works

*Fatwa-i-Alamgiri*, a work of great authority on Muslim Law, and an indispensable guide to the present-day law-makers, was prepared in Arabic by a number of theologians, and later translated into Persian.<sup>34</sup> Muhammad Raza, the foremost huntsman of Aurangzeb's reign, completed an interesting manual on hunting and named it *Saiyd-Nama*.<sup>35</sup> *Mirat-al-Khayal*, a very interesting work, gives in some detail the life and works of the Persian poets and poetesses of India. It was composed in 1690-91 by Ibn Ali Ahmad Khan Sirhindi. *Roz-namcha* of Mirza Muhammad gives useful information about

some of the nobles who survived Aurangzeb. It begins from the year 1707 A.D. *Mukhtsar-i-Mufid* is a short biography which gives geography of Persia with historical notes relating to the Imams and the Safavis. It was completed in Lahore in 1680.<sup>36</sup> *Kashish-Nama* by Raj Karan and *Tuhfat-al-Haqiat* by Brahman Hisari were also composed during this period. *Majmua-ul-Alamgiri*, a useful guide to the duties of the faithful, was completed during Aurangzeb's reign by Abdul Khaliq. *Ganj-i-Arshadi* is a collection of the sayings of Shah Tayyab of Banaras. The *Aina-i-Bakht* by Bakhtawar Khan gives an account of the *qazis*, *muftis* and calligraphists together with the daily routine of Aurangzeb. *Ganj-i-Saadat* is a Sufistic work of Muin-ul-Din. It was dedicated to Aurangzeb.

*Khulasat-al-Maktab*, a rich collection of specimens of refined prose-style, intermixed with verses on all possible topics, by Sujan Singh or Sujan Rai was written in Alamgir's 42nd year in 1110 A.H.<sup>37</sup>

### IMPORTANT COLLECTION OF LETTERS

Some of the famous collections of letters written by prominent and learned persons in Mughal times may be taken note of, for they enriched Persian prose. *Faiyaz-ul-Qawanin*, compiled by Nawab Muhammad Ali Hasan Khan, contains letters of Humayun, Akbar, Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb besides those of Dara and Murad.<sup>38</sup> *Insha-i-Abul Fazal* contains letters about Akbar's official declaration of faith as a Muslim after he had been accused of apostasy by some of his orthodox contemporaries. These letters were compiled by Abdus Samad in 1602. *Insha-i-Faizi* is a collection of Faizi's letters. *Jarida-i-Faramin-i-Salatin-i-Delhi* contains letters written by Akbar to Khan-i-Khanan, Shahbaz Khan, Raza Ali Khan, etc. These letters contain detailed instructions to Akbar's officers for governing the rural country. *Insha-i-Brahman* is a collection of letters of Chandra Bhan Brahman. He was well versed in writing letters in an elegant style.<sup>39</sup> Munir, a famous prose writer of Lahore, says that Brahman's letters were studied with great appreciation even in Persia. The author of *Tazkira-i-Husaini* finds his letters written to nobles and kings very simple and easy to understand. *Insha-i-Harkaran* by Munshi Har



Karan, son of Mathra Dass Multani and secretary to Itbar Khan, was completed between 1624 and 1630. It contains references to instructions about the assessment and collection of land revenues, etc. *Ahkam-i-Shahjahanī* contains letters of Shahjahan to Asaf Khan, Aman Quli of Turan, Ali Adil Shah of Bijapur, to rulers of Golkunda, Shah Abbas of Persia, besides a letter written by Aurangzeb to Shahjahan just before the battle of Samugarh. *Bahar-i-Sukhan* by Muhammad Salih Kambhu, author of *Amal-i-Salih*, contains letters of Shahjahan as also of Aurangzeb to the rulers of Basra, Balkh, Persia, etc.<sup>40</sup> *Insha-i-Jalut-ud-Din Tabatabai* is a collection of letters written during Shahjahan's reign. It contains congratulatory pieces and other occasional<sup>41</sup> compositions. *Ruqqat-i-Shah Abbas Sani* contains some letters regarding the sieges of Qandhar, the Persian intrigues with Murad Baksh and the Deccan Sultans during the War of Succession. *Khatut-i-Shivaji* contains Aurangzeb's letters to Prince Akbar and three Maratha generals besides Shahu's letters and of other notable persons. *Ahkam-i-Alamgiri* (a collection of anecdotes narrated by Hamid-ud-din) contains many anecdotes about Aurangzeb, his sons and officers, and his orders on petitions usually in a caustic vein.<sup>42</sup> *Munshiyat* contains an interesting letter of Aurangzeb to Amdit-ul-Mulk giving him detailed instructions about the reception to be accorded to prince Akbar and the ceremonies to be observed between a Mughal nobleman and a Mughal prince when they met. *Insha-i-Farsi* contains among other things letters from Prince Akbar to Aurangzeb, Sambhaji to Aurangzeb, Muhammad Shah to Nizam-ul-Mulk, etc. *Khulasat-al-Insha* by Sujan Rai Bhandari was completed in Alamgir's 32nd year.<sup>43</sup> Other collections are *Haft-Anjuman* by Talahyar (original name Udai Rai), secretary to Maharaja Jai Singh, and *Insha-Madho Ram* by Madho Ram, who was a *munshi* of Lutf Allah Khan, Naib Subedar of Lahore, in the reign of Aurangzeb. His letters are very difficult to understand.<sup>44</sup>

### Aurangzeb's letters

There are three main collections of Aurangzeb's letters. *Ruqqat-i-Alamgiri* contains 181 letters which are not fully written out, but are a precis of points dictated, including verses and quotations from Arabic texts. Their brevity sometimes makes

them hopelessly obscure. The second is *Ruqaim-i-Karaim*. It is a collection of letters (about 166) written to Shah Alam, Shaista Khan, and Mir Abdul Karim. It was compiled by Sayyid Ashraf Khan. The third collection *Dastur-ul-Amal Agahi* was compiled by Aya Mal Jaipuri in 1743. It contains a number of stories, epigrams and maxims told by the Emperor. There is another important collection called *Adab-i-Alamgiri* which contains fully drafted letters of Aurangzeb from 1654 to 1658 to his father and sons and officers. These letters (628 in number) form a valuable means of estimating his character, and also throw light on many a vexed question. *Kalimat-i-Aurangzeb* contains letters written by the Emperor during his last years.<sup>45</sup>

Aurangzeb's letters, as already narrated, are of great literary value. According to Lane Poole, "the prose style of his Persian letters is much admired in India." Generally the style is simple, polite and graceful but sometimes the language is figurative and too difficult to be understood by the ordinary reader.<sup>46</sup> They abound in domestic and homely touches, his joys and sorrows.<sup>47</sup> They show him a complete master of Persian prose and have "a serene flow of unexceptionable diction characterised by a distinction of phrase and thought. His words are like lancets of steel, yet he maintains a correctitude of phraseology." They form a best guide to the rulers and nobles and a harmless friend to all "whether they love retirement or take delight in society."<sup>48</sup>

### HISTORIOGRAPHY

Ghiyasuddin-bin-Humamuddin, surnamed Khwandamir, the grandson of the famous author of *Rozat-al-Safa*, held a high position among the historians of his age. His famous book *Habib-us-Siyar*, a general history brought down to the year 1524, is the best-known source of the history of Shah Ismail, the Safavi. The narrative, according to Elliot, "is more lively, fresh and interesting" than *Rozat-al-Safa* which the author has consulted and followed. His work, however, contains much superfluous material. Other works by him include *Dastur-al-Wuzara*, which contains the biographies of famous ministers, *Maasir-ul-Muluk*, *Makarim-ul-Akhlaq*, *Khulasat-al-Akhbar*, and *Qanun-i-Humayuni*, also called *Humayun-Nama*, an account of the early years of Humayun's reign, which sheds light on the social and cultural life in that age.

Mirza Barkhurdar Turkman completed his work *Ahsan-al-Siyar* in 1530-31 A.D. It gives in great detail the relations between Babar and Shah Ismail.<sup>49</sup> *Tarikh-i-Ibrahimi* by Ibrahim bin Harine dedicated to Babar in 1528 A.D., is an abridged history of India from earliest times to the conquest of the country by Babar. *Tarikh-i-Muzaffar Shahi* is an account of the capture of Mandu in 1518, interspersed with many beautiful verses. *Tarikh-i-Gujarat* is a history of Gujarat from the reign of Bahadur Shah (1526-36) to the capture of Ahmedabad by Muzaffar Shah III. *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* by Mirza Haidar Dughlat (1499-1551), first cousin of Babar, "forms a most valuable accompaniment to the commentaries of Babar which it illustrates in every page." It covers the history of the Mongol Khans, the *amirs* of Kashgar and some of the events of the reigns of Babar and Humayun. It provides valuable information about Central Asian politics. Mirza Haidar's account of Humayun's misfortunes, his character, disorders which marked the early period of his reign, etc. is very vivid.

Among the histories written during the reign, we have already noticed *Humayun-Nama* of Khwandamir. "Notwithstanding the high flown strain of eulogy in which the work is written, it contains some points of interest."<sup>50</sup> It gives an account of Humayun's rules and regulations and of some buildings erected by him. *Tarikh-i-Ibrahim* or *Tarikh-i-Humayun*, a concise general history extending to 1549-50, was written by Ibrahim ibn Jarir. Mir Ala-ud-Daula, the brother of the famous historian Mir Abdul Latif Qazwini, wrote a fine history *Nafais-ul-Maasir*. Badaoni, Abul Fazl and almost all later historians are indebted to this work for the later phase of Humayun's reign.

### **Humayun-Nama of Gulbadan Begum**

The most important of the histories written during Akbar's reign on Humayun is *Humayun-Nama* of Gulbadan Begum, daughter of Babar. It is divided into two parts. One part is devoted to the history of Babar, and gives interesting details about his family life. The other part deals with the reign of Humayun of which she was an eye witness. It is a very valuable work particularly for the social and cultural history of those times. *Iqbalnama Tarikh-i-Humayun Padshah*, ascribed to Shaikh Faizi, Akbar's poet-laureate, is a poetical work on Humayun.

### Tazkirat-ul-Waqiat and Tarikh-i-Humayun

*Tazkirat-ul-Waqiat* (private memoirs of the Emperor Humayun), commenced thirty years after the death of the monarch in 1586-87 by Humayun's ewer-bearer Jauhar, is a faithful record of Humayun's private life. The style is simple and free from "exaggeration and fulsome eulogy usually resorted to in oriental histories." Even most trivial details are given and the author thinks "nothing too insignificant to relate of so great an Emperor." Jauhar, however, is not dependable as far as dates and events are concerned. *Humayun-Shahi* was the later recensions written at Jauhar's request by Shaikh Faizi Sirhindi. *Tarikh-i-Humayun* of Bayazid, written in the year 999 A.H. at the request of Akbar, is full of useful information, and contains an account of officers and scholars connected with the Emperor from 1542 to 1591.<sup>51</sup> The language used is no doubt shaky and rustic and sometimes the sentences too are incomplete, yet it excels the works of Abul Fazl and Gulbadan Begum in volume and quality.<sup>52</sup> *Humayun-Nama* by an unknown author, written after the style of Firdausi's *Shah-Nama*, is a valuable historical narrative of the battles and conquests of Humayun and his predecessor.

### Akbar-Nama and Ain-i-Akbari

Abul Fazl, author of the *Akbar-Nama*<sup>53</sup> (the chronicle of the reign of Akbar) and *Ain-i-Akbari* (the laws of Emperor Akbar) gives us the minutest details about the institutions and events of his reign with glimpses of his predecessors. Blochmann, Jarrett and Elphinstone have commented on his style and work. Elliot, Dowson and Jadunath also have expressed their opinions. It is agreed by all scholars that "the work will deservedly go down to posterity as a unique compilation." His work, "comprehensive and full of facts and events of his regime, comprising statistics and gazetteer and supplying varied information on the social, political, religious, literary, judicial, civil, military, agricultural and economic progress of the country is without a parallel in the whole history of Hindustan." His language is, however, not simple. The sentences are involved and their construction is peculiar. Sometimes he uses long sentences covering three pages. In spite of various shortcomings of style and language, Abul Fazl's works deserve the highest praise considering the times in which they were written. Abdulla Uzbeg used to say : "I am not so much afraid of the sword of

Akbar as I am of the pen of Abul Fazl." Had Abul Fazl left no records, our knowledge not only about the reign of Akbar but about the whole Mughal dynasty would have been very meagre.<sup>54</sup> *Takmil-i-Akbarnama* is a detailed account of Akbar's reign from the 47th year to his death. It was compiled by Innayat Ullah.<sup>55</sup>

#### **Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh**

*Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh* of Abdul Qadir Badaoni stands second in the list of the histories of that reign. Superior in style to that of the contemporary Bakhshi Nizam-ud-Din, it is certainly inferior to the *Alamgir-Nama* of Muhammad Kazim and the *Padshah-Nama* of Hamid Lahori. Difficult in language, it lacks proper arrangement of events. Its chief merit lies in its exposition of the religious views of the Emperor, and "disparagement of the fulsome eulogium of *Akbar-Nama*." However, Badaoni's approach is biased and he sees everything through the coloured eyes of communalism. It is a general history of India from the times of Ghaznavids to the 40th year of Akbar's reign. It concludes with the lives of saints, philosophers, physicians, and poets of Akbar's reign.<sup>56</sup>

#### **Tabaqat-i-Akbari**

Simple in language, clear in thought, better in arrangement though defective in chronology,<sup>57</sup> Nizam-ud-Din's *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* is one of the most celebrated histories of India. It was written in 1592-93. This was the first history in which India alone formed the subject-matter to the exclusion of the history of the Arabic countries. The history actually begins with the Ghaznavids and comes up to the end of the 38th year of Akbar's reign. Nizam-ud-Din's account is that of a person who "expresses his views without favour or prejudice as Badaoni does." Even Badaoni lavishes praise on the author by calling his own work a mere abridgement of the *Tabaqat*. Ferishta says that of all the histories he consulted, it was the only one he found complete. The later histories, as *Rauzat-ut-Tahrir* by Tahir Muhammad (compiled between 1602 and 1606), *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afghana* by Ahmad Yadgar (compiled in 1611) and *Maasir-i-Rahimi*<sup>58</sup> by Mulla Abdul Baqi (written in 1616) copied verbatim from the *Tabaqat*. Even Khafi Khan, author of the most useful history of Aurangzeb's period, bases his account of the *Panj*

*Hazari* and *Chahar Hazari* amirs and of some of the religious persons and poets on the *Tabaqat*.<sup>59</sup> The author of the *Maasir-ul-Umra* found the work to be of much use. Erskine, Elliot, Dowson, Ranking, Haig, Beni Prasad and Col. Lees are all full of praise for "this best historian of the period,"<sup>60</sup> and consider the *Tabaqat* to be "amongst the best Persian histories and the most reliable source of our information."

### Tarikh-i-Alfi and other works

Another well-known work of the period was *Tarikh-i-Alfi*, a history of the Muslim world up to the 1000th year of the *Hijra* era. It was written by a group of scholars. Naqib Khan, Shah Fath Ullah, Hakim Ali, Haji Ibrahim Sirhindi, Mirza Nizam-ud-Din, and Badaoni took part in its compilation. The first two parts of the volume were prepared under the supervision of Mulla Ahmad Thattawi and the third part was supervised by Asaf Khan. Badaoni revised the second portion.<sup>61</sup> It suffers from a defective plan and lacks uniformity in treatment.

*Tarikh-i-Haqqi* of Abdul Haq is a brief history of Muslim India from the time of the slave-kings to that of Akbar.<sup>62</sup> It is based on *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, *Tarikh-i-Firozshahi*, *Tarikh-i-Bahadur Shahi*, and from the time of Bahlol Lodhi onwards on oral traditions and personal observations. Among other histories written during the period were *Tarikh-i-Khandan-i-Timurya*, the earliest account of Akbar's reign<sup>63</sup> up to his twenty-second year, *Tarikh-i-Muhammad Arif Qandhari* by Muhammad Arif, beginning from Akbar's birth, and closing with the account of a great fire at Fatehpur Sikri<sup>64</sup> (1579-80), *Tarikh-i-Gujarat* by Tarab Ali, based mainly on *Akbar-Nama*,<sup>65</sup> *Tarikh-i-Sind*, often called *Tarikh-i-Masumi*, a history of Sind from the Muslim conquests to its annexation by Akbar, and *Tarikh-i-Tahiri*, a history of Thattah by Tahir Muhammad.<sup>66</sup>

*Halat-i-Asad Beg* or the *memoirs* of the author of the last years of Akbar's reign give a detailed account of political transactions dating from the murder of Abul Fazl.<sup>67</sup> *Akbar-Nama* of Illahadad Faizi Sirhindi is based on *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* but sometimes copies from *Akbar-Nama* also. *Zabd-ut-Tawarikh* of Nur-ul-Haq commences with the reign of Qutb-ud-Din and

ends at the close of Akbar's reign. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh* of Hasan bin Muhammad takes notice of all the Asiatic ruling dynasties with biographies of prophets and sultans. Ali bin Aziz Allah Tabataba wrote *Burhan-i-Maasir* under the orders of Nizam Shah (1591-95). It is a history of the Bahmanis of Gulbarga, the Bahmanis of Bidar and the Nizam Shahis of Ahmadnagar coming down to the year 1596.<sup>68</sup>

### Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri

The *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, as already noticed, is the main source of history for the first 19 years of Jahangir's reign. Gladwin says that the memoirs are "universally admired for the purity, elegance, and simplicity of style, and he appears in general to have exposed his own follies and weaknesses with great candour and fidelity."<sup>69</sup> *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri* by Mutammad Khan is a very valuable history in three volumes. The first part contains the history of Babar and Humayun, the second deals with Akbar, and the third is occupied entirely with Jahangir.<sup>70</sup> "The work does not rank high among the critics," according to Elliot, "but still it is our only and authentic source for the whole reign of Jahangir."<sup>71</sup> *Tatimmat-i-Wakiat-i-Jahangiri* of Muhammad Hadi is a trustworthy record of the principal events of Jahangir's early life before his accession.<sup>72</sup> *Intkhab-i-Jahangir Shahi* (or historical anecdotes of Jahangir) supplies information about Jahangir's character and mode of life.<sup>73</sup> *Pandnama-i-Jahangiri* contains Jahangir's maxims, sayings, his rules and regulations in private and public life.

### Tarikh-i-Ferishta

*Tarikh-i-Ferishta*<sup>74</sup> (also called *Gulshan-i-Ibrahimi*) by Muhammad Qasim Ferishta is "by common consent and not undeservedly considered superior to all the other general histories of India." It begins from the Muslim period and concludes with the events up to the date of its completion in 1611. The work, which also includes an account of minor dynasties, is of great historical value, based as it is on all available authentic sources. His style is generally simple and easy.<sup>75</sup> His work is most authentic for the history of the Sultans of the Deccan. Ferishta is also the author of a well-known unpublished work called *Dastur-al-Atibba*. *Tawarikh-i-Jahangir Shahi* or *Farhing-i-Badi al lugh-*

*at-i-Jahangir*, a brief chronicle of the first fourteen years of Jahangir's reign by Wali Sirhindi, also remains unpublished. *Shah-i-Fath-i-Kangra* by Muhammad Jalal gives six stylistically different accounts of the expeditions sent by Shahjahan as Governor of Gujarat against the rebel Suraj Mal in 1618. *Fath-nama-i-Nur Jahan Begum* by Mulla Kami Shirazi is a *masnavi* describing the events at the close of Jahangir's reign. It was compiled in 1625-26.<sup>76</sup> Among other histories of the same reign are *Mirat-i-Sikandari*,<sup>77</sup> a history of Gujarat from the time of Zaffar Khan, *Tarikh-i-Daudi of Abdullah*, an Afghan version of the history of India under the Lodhis and Suris, *Majalis-al-Salatin*, a brief history of the kings of Delhi, Deccan and Kashmir,<sup>78</sup> *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi*, a history of Bengal and Orissa divided into four chapters, and *Tarikh-i-Turkumamai*, a flowery and almost dateless history of Qara Qyumlu dynasty followed by a history of Tilinga, especially of Sultan Quli Qutb Shahi dynasty.<sup>79</sup> *Maasir-i-Qutb Shahi-i-Mahmudi* by Mahmud bin Abd Allah Nishapuri in three volumes contains a sketch of Qutb Shah's reign along with contemporary events. *Tarikh-i-Muhammad Qutb Shah* by Habib Ullah is a history of Golkunda, while *Tarikh-i Ali Adil Shah Sani* by Nurullah is a history of Bijapur.<sup>80</sup> *Anfa-ul-Akhbar* by Muhammad Amin is a general history full of praise for the author's patron, Nawab Sipahdar Khan, and describes in detail the buildings, gardens and history of Ahmadnagar.<sup>81</sup>

### Histories of Kashmir, Afghans and Deccan

*Makhzan-i-Afghana*<sup>82</sup> by Niamat Ullah, written in 1613, is full of details about the Afghans, their migration to Ghor, Kuh-i Sulaman and Rob. His narrative comes down to 1612.<sup>83</sup> Haidar Malik bin Hasan Malik wrote *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*—mainly an abridgement of *Rajatarangini*—from earliest times to its conquest by Akbar. *Baharistan-i-Shahi*, a history of Kashmir, particularly of the Muslim period up to 1614, was written by an anonymous author in 1614. Another history of Kashmir was written at the request of Jahangir by an anonymous author.<sup>84</sup> *Tazkirat-al-Muluk* is a history of the Adil Shahis up to 1611-12. It also includes contemporary Indian and Persian dynasties.<sup>85</sup> Among the histories of Golkunda, *Maasir-i-Qutb Shahi-i-Mahmudi* by



Mahmud and *Hadiqat-al-Salatin*, a pompous history of Sultan Abdulla Qutb Shah from his birth to the 16th year of his reign (1640-41) deserve mention.

### Historical Works of Shahjahan's reign

Many famous historians adorned Shahjahan's court and produced valuable works. *Maasir-i-Jahangiri* was completed in 1630 by Kamgar Husain while Mu'tamid Khan finished his *Iqbalnama* in 1632. Both these works are valuable source-material for the rebellion of Shahjahan and the events which preceded his accession. According to Shahnawaz, the *Maasir* is very important and outspoken.

Mirza Aminai Qazvini's *Padshahnama*, the first official chronicle of Shahjahan's reign, covers only the first ten years. It is written in simple and graceful Persian. It also contains an account of contemporary scholars, physicians and poets. *Padshahnama*<sup>86</sup> of Abdul Hamid Lahori covers the first two decades (A.D. 1627-1647) of Shahjahan's reign. Abdul Hamid's account is very exhaustive and one gets a good understanding of the political, social and cultural life of the period. This work was continued by Muhammad Warris. who added a list of the saints, poets and scholars of the period but strangely enough excluded Hindus altogether. He also gave a graphic and picture-seque description of the buildings constructed during Shahjahan's reign. The book emphasizes the role of the King as Defender of the Faith. An imitator of the style of Abul Fazl, Abdul Hamid is not less "verbose, turgid and fulsome" than his master.<sup>87</sup>

*Shahjahan-Nama* of Muhammad Sadiq written in simple Persian and of moderate size covers the period 1627-57 of Shahjahan's reign. It forms one of the most reliable sources of information for the period. *Shahjahan-Nama* of Innayat Khan, and Muhammad Salih Kambhu's history of that reign may also be mentioned. The latter was but a summary of the existing works on Shahjahan, while the former was an abridgement of *Padshahnama* of Lahori and Warris.<sup>88</sup> *Amal-i-Salih* by Muhammad Salih Kambhu Lahori is a history of Shahjahan's reign from his birth to his death in 1665 A.D. It is written in highly polished, often rhetorical and refined Persian. A list

at the end takes notice of some prominent shaikhs, physicians, poets and scholars of the period.<sup>89</sup> *Tarikh-i-Shahjahani*, a concise history of Shahjahan from A.D. 1592 to 1666 was compiled by Sudhari Lall Subhan from *Amal-i-Salih* and various other works. Among other histories dealing with Shahjahan's reign are: *Ahwal-i-Shah Zadagi-i-Shahjahan*,<sup>90</sup> an account of Shahjahan's life until his accession (A.D. 1590-1627), by Mutamad Khan<sup>91</sup> and *Padshahnama* of Jalaluddin Tabatabai, which covers only four years from 5th to 8th (A.D. 1632 to 1636) in a highly ornate style.<sup>92</sup> Among the general histories written during the period were *Majalis-us-Salatin* by Muhammad Sharif Hanafi (Compiled in 1628, it begins from Ghaznavid period and comes down to the early part of Shahjahan's reign), *Muntakhab-al-Twarikh* (Completed in 1646-47, it consists of accounts from earlier histories and ends with the accession of Shahjahan), and *Afash-al-Akhar*, a general history by M. Baqir up to the accession of Shahjahan in 1627. Other histories are *Lubb-at-Twarikh*, a general history of India (1176 to 1689) from the time of Shihab-ud-Din by Rai Bindraban, son of Bahara Mal,<sup>93</sup> and *Mukhtasir-ut-Tawarikh*.

Provincial histories include *Majmul Muffussil* of M. Muhammad, *Gwaliyarnama* by Shaikh Jalal Hisari, based on a Hindi work by a Brahman named Shyam, Hashim Beg Astarbadi's *Fatihat-i-Adil Shahi*, a history of Adil Shahis coming down to 1644-45, *Waqiat-i-Dakhan*, an account of events in the Deccan in Shahjahan's reign,<sup>94</sup> and *Tarkhan-Nama*, a history of the Arghun and Tarkhan rulers of Sind (1554-1592) continued to the death of Mirza Asa Tarkhan.<sup>95</sup>

Among the poetical compositions of historical importance are: *Zafarnama-i-Shahjahani*, an incomplete *masnavi* on the life of Shahjahan, *Huliya-i-Shahjahani*, a *masnavi* describing the physical features of Shahjahan, an account of the flight and pursuit of Jhujhar Singh in *masnavi* verse by Abu Talib Kalim, *Shahjahan-Nama*, a metrical history of Shahjahan's reign, *Padshahnama* of Mirza Abu Talib Kalim in verse<sup>96</sup> and *Ashob-nama-i-Hindustan*, a historical *masnavi* on the war of succession between Shahjahan's sons.

### Aurangzeb against historical writings

Aurangzeb stopped the regular annals of the empire which had been kept before by a royal historiographer, because it gave rise, in his opinion, to feelings of undue pride. Of all the great Mughals, he is the only king of whose reign we have no official records. After the expiry of the first ten years of his reign, scholars were forbidden to write or chronicle "the events of this just and righteous emperor's reign."

### Muntakhab-ul-Lubab

The most important history called *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*<sup>97</sup> was compiled in secret by Muhammad Hashim, better known as Khafi Khan. It gives in a concise and condensed form the complete history of the Timurids from Babar's invasion to the 14th year of Muhammad Shah's reign (1719-1748).<sup>98</sup> The work, completed in 1732, is one of the best and the most impartial histories of Muslim India. His style is reflective and language usually simple. To quote Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "His description of the conditions of society and characteristic anecdotes save his work from the dry formality of the court annals." Here and there Khafi Khan adds some unauthentic incidents to make his narration interesting and readable.

### Alamgir-Nama and Fatuhah-i-Alamgiri

The *Alamgir-Nama* by Mirza Muhammad Kazim, son of Aminai Qazvini, author of the *Padshahnama*, covers the first ten years of Aurangzeb's reign. The language is difficult, tedious and verbose. The real facts are frequently suppressed to flatter and please the vanity of the Emperor.<sup>99</sup> The *Alamgir-Nama* of Hatim Khan is an account of the first ten years of Aurangzeb's reign, abridged from the *Alamgir-Nama* of Muhammad Kazim.<sup>100</sup> The *Fatuhah-i-Alamgiri* by Ishar Das Nagar of Pattan in Gujarat is a history of Aurangzeb till the 34th year of his reign (1690-91).<sup>101</sup> The *Fatuhah-i-Alamgiri* by Rafat is a rhetorical account of the victories of Aurangzeb.

### Other Histories

The *Muasir-i-Alamgiri* of Muhammad Saqi Mustaid Khan, completed four years after the death of Aurangzeb (1710-11), is a history of Aurangzeb's reign, the first ten years being an

abridgement of the *Alamgir-Nama*. The style is, no doubt, too concise to have a parallel with any other history of the period. His language is simple and elegant.<sup>102</sup> *Waqiat-i-Alamgiri*,<sup>103</sup> an anonymous history of the first five years of Aurangzeb's reign ended 1662, is ascribed to Aqil Khan Razi or to Mir Khan, subedar of Kabul.

### **Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh and Dilkusha**

The *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh*—a general history of India from the earliest times (beginning from the Pandavas) to the accession of Aurangzeb—was completed in the 40th year of his reign (1695-96) by Munshi Sujan Rai Bhandari of Batala.<sup>104</sup> The opening chapter is most useful, as it gives a detailed information about the products of the country and its geography as known in those times. It is written in a very simple language, and according to Col. Lees, "it is one of the most carefully compiled general histories of India I know of." *Dilkusha* (*Tarikh-i-Dilkusha* or *Nuskha-i-Dilkusha*) by Bhim Sen is a contemporary account of the Deccan affairs. It also throws light on the manners of the age and the character of administration, besides giving a description of the places the author visited.<sup>105</sup> Among other histories of the period are : *Lubb-ut-Tawarikh-i-Hind* (Essence of History), a concise history of India from Shihab-ud-Din to 1689-90 (abridged mainly from *Ferishta*)<sup>106</sup> by Rai Bindraban;<sup>107</sup> *Muntakhab-al-Tawarikh*, a sketch of Indian history abridged from the above by Jag Jiwan Das ; *Jang-Nama* by Danishmand Khan, an account of Aurangzeb's war against the Maharana of Udaipur and of the hostilities between Bahadur Shah and Azam after his death ; *Mirat-ul-Alam* by Bakhtawar Khan<sup>108</sup> ; *Jawahir-al-Tawarikh* by Salman Qazvini, a history of the Mughals from Adam to 1627 A.D. ;<sup>109</sup> *Tarikh-i-Shah Shuja* by Mir Muhammad Masum, ending abruptly with Shuja's return to Tanda;<sup>110</sup> *Tuhfat-al-Akhyar* by M. Safi, a general history up to 1665-1666, etc.

### **Provincial Histories**

Among the provincial histories *Tarikh-i-Asham* of Shihab-ud-Din Talish gives an account of the expedition to Assam undertaken in the fourth year of Aurangzeb's reign. *Tawarikh-i-Ali Adil Shah* by Nur Ullah is a turgid

history of Ali Abdal Shah II from his birth to the invasion of Raja Jai Singh.<sup>111</sup> *Basatin-i-Salatin* by Mirza Ibrahim Zuberi is a history of Bijapur coming down to Aurangzeb's conquest.<sup>112</sup> *Ahwal-i-Salatin-i-Bijapur* is a sketch of Adil Shahi history up to the death of Sikandar in 1699.<sup>113</sup> *Waqai-i-Niamat Khan*, written in highly florid and difficult language, deals with the history of the siege and conquest of Golkunda by Aurangzeb.<sup>114</sup> *Tawarikh-i-Haft Kursi*, a sketch of the Adil Shahi dynasty up to 1686, is by an unknown author. *Waqai-i-Golkunda*, a satirical account of Aurangzeb's siege of Hyderabad, is in mixed prose and verse.<sup>115</sup> *Muhammad-Nama* of Zahur bin Zahuri, began in 1641 by Adil Shah's orders (MS. in Kapurthala), throws light on Sivaji-Afzal Khan relations.<sup>116</sup> *Fatha-Nama*, an account of the conquest of Sholapur by Burhan Nizam Shah, was written by Shah Tahir<sup>117</sup> while *Raj Dilli* is a history of the kings of Delhi by Banwali Das Wali.<sup>118</sup>

### Translations

Akbar ordered those "Hindu books which holy and staid stages had written and were all clear and convincing proof and which were the very pivot on which all their religion, faith and holiness turned" to be translated.<sup>119</sup> Badaoni criticises the intentions of the monarch who was keen to enrich Persian and Arabic literature. The bigoted historian did not realise that it would also help both religions to understand each other. He attributed it to a belief (of the Emperor) that translations of sacred Hindu works would "be the cause of circumstance and pomp and will ensure an abundance of children and wealth," which Badaoni says "is written in the preface of their books."<sup>120</sup> The Emperor rewarded the scholars whose services he utilized. Badaoni was granted 150 *ashrafis* and 10,000 *tankas* for translating 24,000 *slokas*.<sup>121</sup> The *Mahabharata* was ordered to be translated into Persian.<sup>122</sup> Mulla Sheri, Naqib, Sultan Haji<sup>123</sup> and Badaoni took part in its translation. Akbar took great personal interest in the work and spent several nights in explaining its meanings to Naqib Khan. Badaoni would not render an unbiased account and had to be reprimanded.<sup>124</sup> Faizi improved upon the translation and rendered it in "elegant prose and verse" which was again revised by Haji. The translation with a preface by Abul Fazl was entitled the *Razm-Nama* (or Book of Wars).<sup>125</sup>

The *Ramayana*<sup>126</sup> took four years to be translated. Naqib Khan, Shaikh Sultan, and Badaoni were the chief translators.<sup>127</sup> Mulla Sheri translated *Harivansh*, a book depicting the life of Lord Krishna.<sup>128</sup> *Atharva-Veda*, one of the four divine books of the Hindus, was translated by Badaoni and Ibrahim Sirhindi. Badaoni found that most of the principles described therein coincided with the fundamentals of Islam.<sup>129</sup>

*Rajatarangini*, a Sanskrit history of Kashmir for 4,000 years, was translated, according to the *Ain*, in Akbar's reign while the *Iqbal-Nama* ascribed it to Jahangir's reign.<sup>130</sup> *Nal-Daman* was translated by Faizi in the *masnavi* metre of *Laila-Majnun*.<sup>131</sup> It consisted of 4,000 verses.<sup>132</sup> Nasrullah-i-Musta'fi and Maulana Waiz took five months to finish the translation of *Panchatantra*.<sup>133</sup> According to Abul Fazl, "the style and language of the translation was very obscure, difficult, and it abounded with metaphors." *Singhasan Battisi*, containing 32 tales of King Bikramajit of Malwa, was translated by Badaoni and named *Nama-i-Khirad Afza*, which also gives the date of its composition.<sup>134</sup> Besides Sanskrit works in poetry and philosophy, Faizi made a version of *Bija Ganita* and *Lilavati* of Bhascara Acharya, the best Hindu books on algebra and arithmetic. Muhammad Khan of Gujarat translated into Persian the *Tajak*, a well-known work on astronomy.

Todar Mal translated *Bhagavata Purana* into Persian to induce the Hindus to learn that language.<sup>135</sup> *Rajawali*, a short account of the Rajas of Delhi from King Yudishtra to the invasion of Shihab-ud-Din, written originally by Misr Biddya Dhar, was translated into Persian by Shahu Ram, a disciple of Wali Ram.<sup>136</sup>

Prince Dara Shikoh, with the help of *pandits*, translated the *Bhagavad Gita*.<sup>137</sup> *Yoga Vashishta* was also translated under his supervision. However, his greatest literary achievement was the translation of 52 *Upanishads* under the title *Sirr-i-Akbar* or *Sirrul Asrar* with the help of a number of *pandits* of Banaras. The translation was completed in six months. Dara writes that "he himself rendered into Persian (the *Upanishads* which are the store-house of the doctrine of unity) without any increase or decrease, without any selfish motive, sentence for sentence, word for word." Sometimes the translation, no doubt, leaves

the original text to illustrate a point by some example but "we must say he has eminently succeeded in this attempt. The *Sirr-i-Akbar* of Dara Shikoh has not only all the merit of a good translation but also the compactness and charm of an original work."<sup>138</sup> Dara's *munshi*, Banwali Das Wali, translated the Sanskrit drama *Prabodha Chandra Vidya* of Krishna Misr into Persian under the title *Gulzar-i-Hal* with the assistance of the Prince's favourite astrologer, Bhawani Dass. Chandra Bhan Brahaman translated *Atma-Vilasa*, a Vandanta work ascribed to Shankaracharya. He also translated Dara Shikoh's questions relating to Hindu beliefs and customs and their answers by Lal Das into Persian and named it *Sawal Wa Jawab-i-Lal Das Wa Dara Shikoh*.<sup>139</sup>

#### Arabic and Turkish

Besides Sanskrit books, Arabic and Turkish works were translated. Abu Dharr Salman translated *Mukhtar-Nama*, an Arabic work, into Persian in 1539-40 in the reign of Nizam Shah Burhan of Ahmadnagar.<sup>140</sup> Several Arabic scholars of repute as Mulla Ahmad of Thatta, Qasim Beg, Shaikh Munawar and Badaoni took part in the translation of the famous book *Mujam-ul-Buldan* or Yaqut's geographical dictionary. *Tarkh-i-Hukaman* was translated by Masquid Ali of Tabriz, *Haiwat-ul-Haiwan* by Abul Fazl<sup>141</sup> and *Jam-i-Rashidi* by Nizamuddin<sup>142</sup> and Badaoni. Taqi-ud-Din of Shustar<sup>143</sup> turned *Shahnama* into prose. Badaoni translated *Bahr-ul-Asmar*, a work on the *Hadis*, and *Zich-i-Jadid-i-Mirza* was translated under Fath Ullah of Shiraz. *Waqiat-i Timur* was translated into Persian by Mir Abul Talib-i-Turbati during the reign of Shah-jahan. *Tauqiat-i-Kisrawi* was translated from Arabic into Persian by Mirza M. Jalal by the orders of Prince Murad. Much money was spent in transcribing *Amir Hamza* which was done in 12 volumes in 15 years and was illustrated with wonderful paintings by Mir Sayyid Ali Tabriz. The *Chingez-Nama*, *Zafar-Nama*, *Ain-i-Akbari*, *Razm-Nama*, *Ramayana*, *Nal Daman*, *Kalilah Damanah*, *Iyar-i-Danish*, etc. were all illustrated with very beautiful paintings,<sup>144</sup> *Fatwa-i-Alamgiri* was translated into Persian by M. Abdul Hakim of Sialkot and his several pupils. By Zeb-un-Nisa's orders, Mull Safi-ul-Din translated *Tafsir-i-Kalrh* into Persian.

Among the important Turkish works translated into Persian was the *Babar-Nama*. Shaikh Zain-ud-Din Khwafi was said to have been the first to translate or rather to paraphrase the *Babar-Nama* into Persian in an elegant style.<sup>145</sup> Mirza Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan later on, in Akbar's reign, made a complete translation of the work in 1590.<sup>146</sup>

## NOTES

1. Ghani, M.A., Part II, p. 45.
2. *T.A.*, II, p. 686. Also see Badaoni, II, p. 199, Tr. pp. 201-02.
3. Badaoni, III, p. 215, Tr. III, p. 297.
4. Sri Ram Sharma's *A Bibliography of Mughal India* (1526-1707 A.D.), p. 89.
5. Badaoni, III, 5. 185, Tr. p. 259.
6. Badaoni, II, p. 376, Tr. p. 388.
7. Badaoni, I, 472-73, Tr. 611-12.
8. Extracts were included in *A.N.*, Badaoni, III, 265, Tr. III, p. 367.
9. Akbar ordered the author to coin particular Sanskrit names for all things in existence. Badaoni, II, p. 257, Tr. p. 265.
10. Sharma's *Bibliography*, p. 88.
11. *Islamic Culture*, XIII, No. 4, p. 422
12. Extracts translated in E and D, I, pp. 289-99.
13. Phillips, C.H. (Ed.), *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon*, 1967, p. 149.
14. Storey, II, Fasc. III, pp. 556-57.
15. Beni Prasad, *History of Jahangir*, p. 477.
16. Beni Prasad, op. cit., p. 475.
17. *The Jesuits and the Great Moghul* by Sir E. Maclagan.
18. *A.S.B.*, I, 1888, pp.35-36.
19. The whole translation was in verse. Storey, II, Fasc. I, p. 196.
20. Storey, II, Fasc. III, pp. 441-42.
21. Storey, II, Fasc. I, p. 18.
22. Saksena, B.P., *Shahjahan of Delhi*, p. 256.
23. Storey, II, Fasc. 3, p. 568.
24. *Islamic Culture*, April 1945.
25. Sharma's *Bibliography*, p. 81.



26. *Ibid*, p. 131.
27. The best-known translation of the work is by Shea and A. Froyer.
28. Sharma's *Bibliography*, p. 129.
29. *A.S.B.*, Vol. V, No. I, Art. No. 3 by K.B. Zafar Hasan.
30. "Literary Progress of Hindus under Muslim Rule," *Islamic Culture*, XIII, No. 4, pp. 409-16.
31. *Ruqaat-i-Alamgiri*, translation by J.H. Bilimoria, London.
32. Storey, II, Fasc. I, XXXIV.
33. *Islamic Culture*, XIII, No. 4, p. 422.
34. *Maasir-i-Alamgiri* by Saqi, p. 530 ; E and D, VII, p. 160.
35. Sharma's *Bibliography*, p. 130.
36. Storey, II, Fasc. II, p. 237.
37. *Oriental College Magazine* (Lahore), Vol. X, No. 4, August 1934, pp. 66-67 ; Storey, II, Fasc. III, p. 454.
38. Sharma's *Bibliography*, pp. 21-22.
39. *Ibid*, p. 91.
40. *Ibid*, 21-22.
41. *Islamic Culture*, January 1941, p. 66.
42. *Anecdotes of Aurangzib and other Historical Essays* by J.N. Sarkar, Calcutta, 1912.
43. Storey, II, Fasc. III, p. 454.
44. *Adbiat-i-Farsi Main Hinduon Ka Hissa*, p. 78.
45. Sharma's *Bibliography*, p. 17.
46. E & D, VII, pp. 200-201.
47. *Ruqaat-i-Alamgiri* by Ashraf Nadvi, pp. 54-55.
48. E & D, VII, pp. 204-206.
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121. Ain (Bloch), p. 111.
122. *T.A.*, II, p. 562.

123. Sh. Sultan of Thaneswar.
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126. Badaoni, II, 336, tr. 346-47 ; Badaoni, II, 366, tr. 378.
127. *Adbiat-i-Farsi Main Hinduon Ka Hissa*, p. 88.
128. Badaoni, III, n. 2, p. 345; n. 4, p. 350.
129. Badaoni, II, p. 212, tr. p. 216.
130. *Iqbalnama* (Urdu), p. 102.
131. Badaoni, II, p. 396, tr. p. 410.
132. *Ain* (Bloch), p. 113. According to Badaoni, it consisted of 4200 verses. Also see *Ain* (Bloch), p. 113n.
133. *Ain* (Bloch), p. 112.
134. i.e. 989 A.H. *Adbiat-i-Farsi Main Hinduon Ka Hissa*, p. 88.
135. *Literary History of India* by R.W. Frazer, pp. 364-65.
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145. *A.N.*, I, p. 280 n ; Badaoni, I, pp. 341, 471 ; Elliot, IV, p. 288.
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## CHAPTER 14

# Literature III

### HINDI POETRY

Medieval Hindi literature, according to Grierson, an eminent linguist, is an "enchanted garden abounding in beauties."

There was a cultural renaissance in India in the 16th century. In literature, religion and music a galaxy of great talents enriched her cultural heritage. The keynote of this revival was a higher synthesis in which the soul of India was striving to attain a new spiritual equilibrium and the beauty of individual life. The renaissance in literature was primarily due to the advent of the Mughals having their own well-developed and artistic language, namely Persian. The benevolent attitude of the Mughal emperors also helped to develop the Indian languages. Hindi was definitely taking shape in the time of Humayun and Sher Shah. Maillk Muhammad Jayasi's famous *Padmavat* (1540 A.D.) was produced in this period.

Akbar took a keen interest in the cultivation of every kind of knowledge. He is said to have composed a few verses in Hindi under the pen-name of *Akbar Ray*. His special regard for his Hindi subjects and their learning imparted a great stimulus to the development of Hindi literature. The greatest poets of Hindi, Sur Das and Tulsi Das, belong to his period. Jahangir continued to patronize Hindi poets and scholars. He had such a good command over Hindi that he could even understand the most intricate verses. In his *Tuzuk*, Jahangir writes about a Hindi poet who was brought to him by Rao Surjan Singh, a noble :

"I read his poem. Few Hindi verses of such freshness

have ever reached my ears. As a reward for this I gave him an elephant."

For the first time in his reign endeavours were made by scholars such as Kesava Das to systematize the art of poetry. Shahjahan kept up the traditions of his predecessors. The Emperor himself composed verses in Hindi.

In spite of Aurangzeb's policy of religious intolerance, his reign was not lacking in Hindi poets and writers. But they were truly symbolic of the period. Decadence was writ large everywhere, and poets and scholars, with one or two exceptions, were mere imitators of their great predecessors.

Almost the entire Hindi literature of medieval India is in verses. Poetry was the most accepted form of expression in the field of literature. Prose was practically unknown and thought to be a difficult vehicle of expression even when tackling serious argumentative and dull topics. Besides poetry, there was some literature of a technical nature dealing with the rules of prosody and art of writing poetry (and also some biographies of saints) but this too was in verse. *Nakha-Shikha* or detailed description of the beauty of the beloved was a popular composition.

This literature mostly dealt with the two incarnations (of Vishnu), Krishna and Rama. The creation of these two schools dates back to the time of the *Padmavat* (1540 A.D.). The stories of these two deities, with little difference in treatment, form the theme of almost all poets and writers.<sup>1</sup> Braj, the birth-place of Lord Krishna, naturally became the resort of Krishna poets. Vallabhacharya and his son Vithal Nath were the founders of this school. Of the eight disciples of this school known as *Ashta Chhap*, Sura and Krishna Das are the most celebrated. The remaining six poets of *Ashta Chhap* are Kumbhan Das, Parmanand Das, Chhit Swami, Govind Swami, Chaturbhaj Das and Nand Das. *Bhaktamala* of Nabha Das is the most reliable authority on the Krishna poets. Tulsi, the greatest poet of his age, belongs to the second school devoted to the worship and adoration of Lord Rama. Grieson writes :

"Sura Das and Tulsi Das possessed the strength of giants

and were far beyond their contemporaries in polish and in sense of proportion....”

Both these outstanding poets belong to “Sagun Dhara,” Rama and Krishna Bhakticults of Hindu philosophy of India. They believed in God through form and content and propagated universal love. But the minor poets could not keep themselves within bounds and so there grew up another school of poets who laid down the rules of poetic criterion. Kesava Das, Chintamani Tripathi, and Kalidas Trivedi are well-known writers of this class. The 16th and 17th centuries “saw the rise of some remarkable religious sects which gave birth to a considerable body of literature.” Guru Nanank, Dadu, Pran Nath and Guru Govind Singh belong to this class of reformers. Some of the courtiers of Akbar, such as Todar Mal, Birbal, Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan, etc., were not only patrons of learning but also composed verses in Hindi.

### Early Hindi Poets

#### Guru Nanak and Kabir :

Guru Nanak (1469-1538), founder of the great Sikh religion, composed *Japji Sahib* which contains hymns in the early forms of Hindi and Punjabi. It forms a book of daily prayers for the Sikhs. Besides this, he composed a large number of verses which are included in the *Adi Granth*,<sup>2</sup> which is a collection of hymns by various authors. A few of these hymns are in Punjabi, some in Marathi but most of them are in old western Hindi.<sup>3</sup> He was a great admirer of the philosophy of life as depicted by Kabir. The clarity and simplicity of his verses is an easier vehicle for his teachings. Here is a verse of his : <sup>4</sup>

इस दम दा मैं नू की वे भरोसा, आया आया, न आया न आया ।  
यह संसार रैन दा सुपना कहीं देखा, कहीं नाहि दिखाया ॥  
सोच विचार करे मत मन में जिसने ढूँढा उसने पाया ।  
नानक भक्तन दे पत परसे निसदिन रामचरन चित लाया ॥

*Life may cease any moment. This world is false like a dream. We must have faith in God and practise high morality.*



Kabir (15th century) was the pioneer of Nirguna Bhakti cult. His verses are composed in mixed language containing Awadhi, Braj, Poorbi (Bihari) and Persian words. He was a reformer and stood for Hindu-Muslim unity. His composition *Beejak* is divided into three parts, *Ramaini*, *Sabada* and *Saakhi*. *Ramaini* and *Sabada* consist of *padas*, and *Saakhi* is full of couplets. The main theme of *Beejak* is mostly derived from the *Vedant* philosophy and aims at reformation in all walks of human life.

*God is One. Allah, Rama, Karim, Keshava, Hari, Hazrat are His synonyms.*

The other known poets of Nirguna Bhakti cult are Raidas or Ravi Das, Dharam Das, Dadu Dayal, Sundar Das, Maluk Das and Akshar Ananya.

### Meera Bai

Meera Bai (16th century), the great granddaughter of Rana Jodha Ji, founder of Jodhpur, was a staunch devotee of Lord Krishna. Some of her *padas* are in Rajasthani mixed language and the others in pure literary Braj Bhasha. Four *granthas*—*Narasi Ji Ka Mayara*, *Geeta Govinda Teeka*, *Raga Govinda*, *Raga Soratha Ke Pada*—are said to have been composed by her.

बसो मेरे नैनन में नंदलाल ।  
 मोहिन मूरति, साँवरि सूरत, नैना बने विशाल ॥  
 मोर मुकुट मकराकृत कु डल, अरुन तिलक दिये भाल ।  
 अघर सुधा रस मुरली राजति, डर बैजंती माल ।  
 छुद्र घंटिका कटि तट सोभित, नूपुर शब्द रसाल ॥  
 मीरा प्रभु संतन सुखदाई, भक्त बछल गोपाल ॥

*O my Lord !  
 Come and live in my eyes.  
 You are really very handsome  
 with your sweet face,  
 radiant blue frame and  
 bewitching eyes,  
 the peacock-feather crown on your head,*

*ear-rings of the shape of a shell  
and the red 'tilak' on your forehead  
along with the sweet flute clinging by your lips,  
a garland on your chest,  
small bells ringing round your waist  
and making soft sounds on your ankles.  
Ye ! Lord of Meera, your gracious figure fills  
the hearts of your devotees with ecstasy.*

In the above *pada* Meera describes the beauty of Lord Krishna and desires to see this beauty for ever.

The Krishna Bhakti cult also produced a number of talented poets. Lal Das's two *granthas*—*Hari Charitra* composed in 1528 A.D. and *Bhagavata Dashmaskandhi Bhasha*<sup>5</sup>—in mixed Awadhi Bhasha and in *dohas* and *chaupais* are definitely of inferior quality when judged by poetic standards.<sup>6</sup>

### Muhammad Jayasi

*Padmavat*<sup>7</sup>, the famous romantic and half historical epic composed about the year 1540 A.D. by the celebrated Malik Muhammad Jayasi, the most important poet of the age of Sher Shah, derives its theme, with certain modifications in the actual facts of the story for poetical effects, from Ala-ud-Din's conquest of Chitor. At the end, the poet gives an allegorical religious-philosophical interpretation of the poem. "Chitor," according to him, "represents the human body, Ratna Sen, the soul. Padmavati is the wisdom, while Ala-ud-Din is a spiritual delusion."

*Padamavat*, composed in the Hindi metre and Hindi dialect but based on the Persian *masnavi* style, is among the first few notable works which do not deal with either Rama or Krishna. Though essentially a love story, the author has succeeded in keeping before his readers lofty and pure ideals. The original poem is difficult to understand but its originality and poetic beauty make it "one of the masterpieces of Hindi literature." The author, with his beautiful couplets and *chaupais*, has woven a really fine poem. It is also remarkable for the vein of tolerance which runs through it

in every way worthy of Kabir and Tulsi Das. *Padmavat* begins thus:<sup>8</sup>

सन् नौ सौ सैंतालिस अहा । कथा अरम्भि बैन कवि कहा ।

(the poet began the narration in 947). And some of his concluding verses are

तन चितउर, मन राजा कीन्हा । हिय सिंघल, बुधि पदमिनि कीन्हा  
गुरू सुआ जेइ पंथ देखावा । विनु गुरु जगत को निरगुन पावा ।  
नागमती यह दुनिया धंधा । बाँचा सोई न अहेहि चित बंधा ॥  
राघव दूत सोई सैतानू । माया अलाउदीं सुलतानू ॥

*Chitor* symbolizes human body, the king the mind, *Sinhal* the heart. *Padmini* the brain and the parrot a spiritual guide, without whom nobody can detect Absolute. *Nagamati* is a symbolic figure for wordly affairs. He who has no attachment with wordly affairs escapes. *Raghava*, the messenger, symbolizes Satan, and *Ala-ud-Din*, the King, illusion.

*Akhravata*, another composition of Jayasi, is a religious book mainly in *chaupais* wherein the author discusses various points connected with *Ishvara* (God) worship, the world, humanity, etc.<sup>9</sup>

### Gadai Dehalvi

In the reign of Humayun, Shaikh Gadai Dehalvi was the first notable scholar who combined the knowledge of Arabic and Persian with that of Hindi. He composed verses in Hindi and often sang them.

Shaikh Abdul Wahid Bilgrami and Maulana Jalali "Hindi" were also Hindi poets. The latter was known for composing lyrics and enigmas.

Kirpa Ram (fl. 1540) was the author of *Hita Tarangini*, the earliest extant work in Braj Bhasha dealing with the art of poetry.<sup>10</sup> His couplets resemble those of Bihari Lal's.<sup>11</sup>

### Krishna Das and Parma Nand

Krishna Das (16th century) was one of the *Ashta Chhops* or famous eight poets, and composed several well-known works such as *Jugal Mancharitra*, containing verses

which depict the love of Lord Krishna and Radha, *Bhramar Geet* and *Prem Tatvaniropana*.<sup>12</sup> According to Grierson, he is "a graceful and sweet poet"<sup>13</sup> and wrote original poetry. Parma Nand Das, who flourished in 1550 A.D., wrote very easy verses. *Dhruva Charitra* and *Dan-Lila* are his important works.<sup>14</sup> Shri Vallabha Acharya was amazed to read his verses. Narottam Das's (fl. 1545 A.D.) *granth*, *Sudama Charitra*, discusses in a very sweet style and simple language the hardships a poor man has to endure due to poverty. The high character of the hero of the story in this ocean of misery makes it a wonderful piece of work. Shri Bhatt's (fl. 1544 A.D.) verses are in simple Hindi. His *padas* (songs) are short. *Yugala Shataka*, a small collection of his hundred *padas*, is considered sacred among Krishna *bhaktas*. *Adi Bani* is another work by him.<sup>15</sup>

ब्रजभूमि मोहनी मैं जानी ।

मोहन कुंज, मोहन वृंदावन, मोहन जमुना-पानी ॥

मोहन नारी सकल गोकुल की, बोलति अमरित-बानी ।

श्री भट के प्रभु मोहन नागर, मोहनि राधा रानी ॥

*I know the Braj Bhoomi is charming; so are groves, Brindavana and water of the Yamuna. The ladies of the entire Gokal are attractive. They speak in a sweet tone. Lord of Shri Bhatt is captivating and so is Radha Rani.*

#### Narhari Bandijana

Maha Patra Narhari Bandijana<sup>16</sup> (fl. 1550 A.D.)<sup>17</sup> was greatly honoured at the court of Akbar, who conferred upon him the title of *Maha Patra*. The Emperor was so much pleased with his following verse that he, according to the poet's desire, ordered cow-slaughter to be stopped forthwith.

अरिहु दंत तिनु धरैं ताहि नाहि मारि सकत कोइ ।

हम संतत तिनु चरहि, वचन उच्चरहि दीन होइ ।

अमृत पय नित सर्वाहि, बच्छ महि थंभन जावहि ॥

हिंदुहि मधुर न देहि, कटुक तुरकहि न पियावहि ।

कह कवि नरहरि अकबर मुनौ बिनवति गउ ज़ोरे करन ।

अपराध कौन मोहि मारियत मुअहु चाम सेवइ चरन ॥

*When the enemy surrenders with a straw between his teeth, nobody kills him. On the other hand, we, the cows, eat grass but we are slaughtered. We very humbly state that we always supply sweet milk at the cost of our offspring, and we do not give Hindus sweet milk or Muslims pungent milk. Poet Narhari requests Akbar to consider the petition of cows as to what offence they are slaughtered when even after death they serve the human feet with their skins.*

He is especially known for his *chhappaya* and *kavitta*. *Rukmini Mangal* and *Chhappaya Niti* are his well-known works besides a collection of his verses entitled *Kavitta Sangraha*.<sup>18</sup>

Vyasji's (fl. 1554 A.D.) verses are in *padas* and *sakhiyans*. His only book is *Ras Panchaadyayi*.<sup>19</sup>

Among other works of the period are *Rama Bhushana* and *Alankara Chandrika* by Gop Kavi (fl. 1558 A.D.), *Shringar Sagar* by Mohan Lal Misra (fl. 1558 A.D.), *Dwadasha Yasha*, *Bhakti Pratapa*, *Hitjoo Ko Mangala* and some compositions in *phutkal padas* by Chaturbhuj Das (fl. 1567 A.D.), son of the poet Kumbhan Das and a disciple of Vithal Nath Ji. The flow of his verses and the simplicity of his style can hardly be surpassed.<sup>20</sup>

#### Akbar as a poet

No account of Hindi verses of either Babar or Humayun is available but Akbar, under the nom de plume Akbar Ray, composed a few Hindi verses. In reply to Raja Bhagwan Das's verse,

*Humari Baiti Tumharay Mahalon Ki Cheri  
Ham Band Gulam Ray*

Akbar replied in verse :

*Tumhari Baiti Hamaray Mahalon Ki Rani  
Tum Sab Sardar Ray*

A Hindi couplet composed by Akbar on Birbal's death :

दीन देखि सब दीन, अक न दीन्हों दुसह दुख ।  
सो अब हम कहं दीन, कछु नहि राख्यो बीरबल ॥

*Seeing me forlorn, he gave me everything except unbearable  
doulour, which he has given me now and thus Birbal has  
kept nothing with him.*

Besides many works in Sanskrit, Swami Hari Das (fl. 1560 A.D.) left poems in Hindi such as *Hari Das Ji Ka Granth*, *Swami Hari Das Ji Ke Pada*, and *Hari Das Ji Ki Bani*. Keay adds *Sadharan Siddhant* and *Ras Ke Pada*. His verses are in difficult language and are not so popular. According to Grierson, however, his "vernacular poems rank next after those of Sur Das and Tulsi Das."<sup>21</sup>

### Nand Das

Nand Das (fl. 1568 A.D.) was a poet of renown. Next to Sur Das he holds the highest place among the *Ashta Chhap* poets. On Akbar's request he visited the court and sang his favourite hymn ending with the words : "*Nandadasa Tharho nipata nikata.*" (My soul, thou standest very close and near Him.) When the Emperor pressed him for the meaning or significance of "standing very close and near Him," he became rapt in a trance and thus freed his soul from earthly shackles and stood as he stated "very close and near his Lord." His poetic skill is admirable. Sweet in rhyme, his verses at the same time are very easy to understand. The well-known proverb<sup>22</sup>

और कवि गढ़िया, नंददास जड़िया ॥

(Others poet coin and Nand Das inlays.)

is significant. A large number of works are attributed to him. *Ras Panchadhayi* in *Rolla chhundās* is perhaps the most celebrated. It narrates the miracles of Lord Krishna in a very pleasing manner. Besides *Bhagavata Dashama Skandha*, he is said to have composed *Rukmani-Mangala*, *Roopa Manjari*, *Rasa Manjari*, *Biraha Manjari*, *Nama Chintamani Mala.*, *Anekarth-nama Mala*, *Dan Lila*, *Mana Lila*, *Anekartha-Manjari*, *Shyama Sagai*, *Bhramar Geet*, *Hitopadesha* and *Nasikait Puran*, but most of his works are not traceable. However, four of them have been published, namely *Ras Panchadhyayi*, *Bhramar Geet*,

*Anekartha Manjari* and *Anekarthnama Mala*.<sup>23</sup> Some of his Hindi verses from *Bhramar Geet* are quoted below :

कहन स्याम-संदेश अक मैं तुम पै आयो ।  
 कहन समय संकेत कहूं अवसर नाहि पायो ॥  
 सोचत ही मन में रह्यो कब पाऊं इक ठाऊ ।  
 कहि संदेश नंदलाल को, बहुरि मधुपुरी जाऊ ॥  
 सुनौ ब्रजनागरी ।

*Addressing Braj maidens, Udho spoke thus: "I have brought a message from Lord Krishna but I did not find proper time and place to disclose it. On conveying the message I shall again go to Mathura."*

#### Manohar

Manohar (fl. 1577 A.D.), nom de plume "Tosha," was well read in Persian and Sanskrit. His couplets contain many Persian words. Well chosen as they are, they add to the beauty of the verses. *Shatoprashnотri* is a collection of his verses.<sup>24</sup>

#### Birbal

Raja Birbal (A.D. 1528-1583) or Mahesh Das, nom de plume "Brahma," is well-known for his short verses of witty and humorous nature. His verses were much liked, and Akbar conferred on him the title of *Kavi Raya* or Hindi poet laureate. He has left a collection or *diwan* of several hundred verses. It is in Bharatpur.<sup>25</sup>

### The Age of Great Poets

#### Surdas

Surdas (16th century), the blind bard of Agra, is by unanimous consent the greatest lyricist of our country. He is the foremost poet of the Krishna sect and ranks second only to the great Tulsi.<sup>26</sup> According to a well-known proverb, "Sura is the sun, Tulsi the moon, Keshav Das is a cluster of stars but the poets of today are like so many glowworms giving light here and there."

As a poet with insight into child psychology, Sura has no equal. Krishna's childhood constitutes the first great theme

of Sura's poetry. To him Krishna is the divine being—God at the helm of affairs of the universe. Some of his verses relating to Lord Krishna's childhood are as follows :

१. काहे को आरि करत मेरे मोहन यों तुम आँगन लोटी ?  
जो माँगहु सो देहु मनोहर, यहै बात तोरी खोटी ॥  
सूरदास को ठाकुर ठाड़ो हाथ लकुट लिए छोटी ॥
  २. सोभित कर नवनीत लिए ।  
घुटरन चलत रेनु-तन-मंडित मुख दधिलेप किए ॥
  ३. सिखवत चलन जशोदा मैया ।  
अरबराय करि पानि गहावति, डगमगाय घरनी घरै पैयाँ ॥
- (1) *Oh my Lord Krishna, why do you quarrel, why are you lying like this on the floor ? I can offer you anything which you like but your quarrelling out of anger is no good. Krishna, the Lord of Surdas, stood fast in anger with his small rod.*
  - (2) *Krishna is looking beautiful with butter in his hand. He crawls on his hands and knees with dust on his body and his face painted with curd.*
  - (3) *Yashoda prompts Krishna to walk. She supports him with her hands and Krishna staggers along.*

The second great theme of Sura's poetry is love. With him love is a sublimated theme representing the irresistible attraction of the *gopis* of Brindaban towards the youthful and lovely Krishna. The intensity of passion displayed by the *gopis* for the person of Krishna is an expression of the natural attraction of the human spirit towards the divine soul. Here the poetic genius of Surdas bursts forth into a series of excellent *padas* of great poetic merit. Surdas, convinced of the superiority of devotion over reason, conveys his message in a series of perfectly charming verses.

Surdas composed several thousands of lyrical songs or *padas* in the most beautiful language and style. The power of his music and the earnestness of his words wield a profound and far-reaching influence. His songs and hymns are usually short *padas* (or simple stanzas of four lines), the first line forming a subject which is repeated as the last and the burden of the song.



The following is a contemporary opinion about his achievements :

उत्तम पद कवि गंग के, कवित्त को बलबोर ।

केशव अर्थ गंभीरता, सुर तीन गुन धीर ॥

(Gang excels in sonnets and Birbal in the *kavitta* metre, Kesav's meaning is ever profound but Sura possesses the excellence of all the three.)<sup>27</sup>

Unlike Tulsi Das, who touched almost every aspect of human life, Sura, while confining himself to a few, has seen it through once for all. He has left nothing to be added to. In the field of *Shringar* and *Vatsalya* he still remains unsurpassed. Realism is the keynote of Sura's poetry, while Tulsi possesses more idealism. He wrote in the Braj Bhasha dialect of western Hindi and his language is considered to be the purest specimen of that form of speech. Most later writers have adopted this dialect.

Sura's monumental work, the *Sura-Sagar* (the Ocean), is a collection of 5000 *padas* exceeding in length the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* combined and yet a high level of beauty is maintained throughout. It is a story of Lord Krishna from his birth to his departure for Mathura. Ten important chapters of the *Bhagavad Gita* are dealt with in great detail while the rest are finished in a few *padas*. The *Bhramar Geet* (Song of the Black Bee) is a unique literary composition unsurpassed for its metaphysical import and poetic charm and grace by any similar composition in world literature. In all he is said to have composed not less than 75,000 verses.

### Hita Hari Vans

Hita Hari Vans of Mathura or Hit Ji (16th century) is among the few distinguished writers of the period. He had a complete command over Sanskrit and Hindi. Besides a work in Sanskrit entitled *Radha Sudhanidhi*, consisting of 170 *stokas*, he left a collection of Hindi verses entitled *Hita Chaurasi*, containing 84 *padas*. The author of *The Religious Literature of India* ascribes another Hindi work, *Sphutapada*, to him.<sup>28</sup>

**Dadu Dayal**

Dadu Dayal (A.D. 1544-1603), founder of the sect Dadupanthis, composed verses in the western Hindi dialect mixed with Rajasthani. Persian and Punjabi words also occur quite frequently. His *Bani* (poetic utterances of religious nature) is in 5,000 verses arranged in 37 chapters, each deciding a major religious question. Here is a verse by him.<sup>29</sup>

धीव दूध में रमि रहया व्यापक सबही ठौर ।  
दादू बकता बहुत हैं, मथि काढ़े ते और ॥

**Keshava Das**

Keshava Das (c. 1565-1617 A.D.),<sup>30</sup> a great Sanskrit scholar, is ranked among the greatest poets of his age. His huge total of verses composed in almost all the different types of Hindi poetry, as *padas*, *dohas*, *chaupais*, etc. prove him to be master of Hindi *kavita*. His verses, no doubt, lack the simplicity and forceful touches felt in Tulsi Das's and Surdas's verses mainly due to the frequent use of Sanskrit words. But judged from the poetic standards, Keshava outshone his two great compatriots in strictly confining himself to the limitations imposed.<sup>31</sup>

His two celebrated *granths* are *Kavi Priya* and *Rasika Priya*. The first is on *Alankaras*, while the second deals with the laws of writing poetry. *Kavi* or *Kavi Priya* has come to be a standard authority on the art of poetry. He discusses various topics such as *Kavya-Bhedas*, *Alankara Bhedas*, etc. and cites original verses of great literary merit in support of his contentions.

Balbhadra Misra (fl. 1583 A.D.), said to be the elder brother of Keshava Das, ranks among the first few honoured ones who composed their verses in conformity with the rules of writing poetry and did not even for poetical effects go out of the prescribed limits. Balbhadra is the author of many scholarly works including a commentary on the *Bhagavata Purana*. His famous work *Nakha-Shikha* describes in the minutest detail every part of the body of a hero and a heroine, citing verses to illustrate his viewpoint. *Nayaka-Nayika Bheda*, another work by him, describes various kinds of heroes and heroines, classified under various categories. Some other works, such as *Balbhadri*

*Vyakaran*, *Hanuman-Nataku* and *Govardhana Sat Sai Tika* are also ascribed to him. *Dushana Vichara* is said to be another composition of Balbhadra.<sup>32</sup>

### Ras Khan

Ras Khan's (fl. 1583 A.D.) two works, *Premvatika* and *Sujan Raskhan*,<sup>33</sup> have been published. The purity of his ideas and the simplicity of his language are greatly admired.<sup>34</sup> He has been given a place in the discourses of 252 *Vaishnavas*.<sup>35</sup>

Beni Madhava Das (fl. 1600 A.D.) wrote *Gosain Charitra*, a biography of his master, Tulsi Das.

### Nabha Das

Nabha Das Ji (fl. 1600 A.D.) was a disciple of Agra Das. His most celebrated composition *Bhakta Mala*, completed after 1642, contains an account of about 200 *Vaishnava* devotees (both the worshippers of Rama and Krishna, though the former predominate) in 316 pages comprising 108 stanzas. The poem mainly in *chhappaya* metre is written in old western Hindi. The original work, full of legends connected with the life of each personage and his teachings, is too compressed and its style too difficult to be understood by the average reader. Growse observes: "A single stanza is all that is ordinarily devoted to each personage who is panegyrised with reference to his most salient characteristics in a style that might be described as of unparalleled obscurity."<sup>36</sup> The work, which is little more than a catalogue, is a useful contribution to Indian religious history. Besides *Rama Charita Sambandhi*, a collection of his *padas*, he wrote two *Ashta-Yamas*, one in Braj-Bhasha prose and the other in *dohas* and *chaupais* on the lines of *Ramacharit Manas*.

### Ganga Kavi

Ganga Kavi (A.D. 1533-1617) was a *darbari kavi* at the court of Akbar, who held him in high esteem. His real name was Ganga Prasad. His generous patron Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan is reputed to have awarded him Rs. 36 lakhs for the following verses composed by him.

चकित भंवर रहि गयो, गमन नहीं करत कमलबन ।  
अहि फन मनि नहि लेत, तेज नहि बहत पवन घन ॥

हंस मानसर तज्यो, चक्क चक्की न मिलै अति ।  
 बहु सुंदरि पद्मिनी पुरुष न चहैं, न करैं रति ॥  
 खलभलति सेस कवि गंग मन, अमित तेज रविरथ खस्यो ।  
 खानान खान बैरम सुवन जवहि क्रोध करि तंग कस्यो ।

*When Khan-i-Khanan, son of Bairam, tightens the girth in anger, the black bee is taken aback and does not fly to the lotus garden. The snake does not take back the gem into its hood. The wind does not carry the clouds. The swan leaves the Manasarowara lake. The chakor and the chakori do not meet each other. The most beautiful damsel does not want her partner and there is no sexual passion. There is commotion in Poet Gang's mind, and the sheen of the sun's chariot fades.*

The poet eulogises Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan indirectly that when Khan-i-Khanan saddles his horse in an angry mood, the black bee is thunder-struck and does not fly to the lotus park, the hood of snake does not take the jewel, clouds are not borne by air swiftly, the swan leaves the Manasarowara, the partridge does not mate, the beautiful damsel (Padmini) does not desire the company of her partner for copulation, the Shesha serpent is alarmed, so is poet Ganga's mind and the glare of sunshine is diminished.

He was well-known for his comic style and was at his best in the description of battles. Bhikhari Das Ji praises him in the following well-known words :

तुलसी गंग दुवौ भये सुकविन के सरदार ।

Both Tulsi and Ganga were leaders among poets)

Complete works of Ganga have now been published under the title *Ganga Kavitta* by Nagari Pracharini Sabha, Kashi.

### Tulsi Das

The greatest of all the poets of northern India was Tulsi Das (16th century), the renowned author of the immortal work *Ramacharit Manas* (The Lake of the Deeds of Rama), popularly known

as the *Ramayana*. He was one of the chief glories of the reign of Akbar. He has been truly claimed as "the greatest man of the age—greater than Akbar himself as far as the conquest of the minds of the people was concerned." Grierson writes: "Looking back along the vista of centuries we see his noble figure unapproached and solitary in its niche in the temple of Fame, shining in its own pure radiance."

He deserves the splendid fame which his work has brought him. He is loved and honoured in every town and village of northern India. He made the countryside ring with the simple name of Rama. *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, and *Puranas* are not read by the majority of the people of India, who look upon Tulsi's simple *Ramayana* as the only standard of moral conduct.<sup>37</sup>

The poet began his huge epic poem at Ayodhya in the year 1574 and completed it on the sacred banks of the Ganges at Banaras in 1584 A.D. It is in no sense a translation of Valmiki's Sanskrit *Ramayana* but is quite independent in its treatment. The latter work may be considered one of its main sources. The general plan and the management of the incidents necessarily remain the same but there is difference in the touch in every detail. The difference in the theological outlook, however, is great. Rama is no longer a human being of the original text but appears as an incarnation of the supreme God in Tulsi's *Ramayana*. Less wordy and diffused, it is free from repetitions and interpolations of the Sanskrit text.

The poem was composed in the Avadhi dialect of the eastern Hindi, also called *Baiswari*, which has been adopted since then by all later writers for writing epic poetry. Tulsi, however, uses many words from other dialects, especially Braj Bhasha. He frequently uses Sanskrit words and has little hesitation in altering a word or employing a corrupt one to suit his metre and rhyme. He has been able to produce a strange yet beautiful combination of simple Avadhi and classical Sanskrit. Occasionally Arabic and Persian words also occur.

The full force of Hindi poetry first becomes visible in his verses, which acted like a magnet in attracting the minds of the people revealing to them the inherent sweetness and purity of the language. He showed himself a complete master of every type of Hindi poetry and the highest title of *Poorana Kavi* has been given to him.<sup>38</sup>

Unlike other poets Tulsi draws his similes and metaphors direct from nature itself. His perfect *kavittas*, free from the limitations of poetic rules, containing the beautiful description of nature, are as fresh today as they were centuries ago. Simple in language, chaste in style, pure in sentiments and full of lofty ideas, his works, especially the most celebrated *Ramacharit Manas*, have been rightly regarded as the greatest contribution ever made to the Indian literature. His works not only spread far and wide the ideal of Lord Rama but also saved people, by the tremendous influence of their chastened style and the noble ideas underlying their theme, from falling into the depths of that obscenity towards which the realistic rendering of the spiritual love of Radha and Krishna was tending. There is not an impure image or word in all his works from beginning to end.<sup>39</sup>

Several works are attributed to Tulsi Das. Twelve of them, six big and six smaller ones, are well-known. *Dohavali* (containing more than 700 *dohas*), *Kavitta Ramayana* (in praise of Lord Rama), *Gitavali* and *Vinaya Patrika*<sup>40</sup> (poetical compositions of a devotional or moral character containing a great variety of *kavittas* and *padas* in honour of Rama and Sita), *Rama Ajna Prashnavali*<sup>41</sup> (written at the instance of Pt. Ganga Ram Jyotishi), and the famous *Ramacharit Manas* are the big ones. The smaller *granth*s are *Ram Lala Nahachhu*, *Parvati*, *Mangal*, *Janaki Mangal*, and *Barvai Ramayana*, composed at the instance of Khan-i-Khanan, *Vairagya Sandipani*, and *Krishna Gitavali*. Here are a few typical verses by Tulsi Das :

रीझि आपनी बूझ पर, खीझि विचार-विहीन ।  
ते उपदेस न मानहीं, मोह-महोदधि मीन ॥  
लोगन भलो मनाव जो भलो होन को आस ।  
करत गगन को गेंडुआ सो सठ तुलसीदास ॥  
की तोहि लागहि राम प्रिय, की तू प्रभुप्रिय होहि ।  
दुइ महं रुचै जो सुगम सोइ कीजै तुलसी तोहि ॥

*Those who are the fish of the ocean of ignorance, are satisfied with their intellect, feel vexed because of scatter-brain and do not accept monition.*

*One should wish welfare of the people only when there is*

*hope for their welfare, Tulsidas says he who considers sky a pillow is a rogue.*

*Either you love Rama or you are loved by Rama. Tulsidas says: "Do what you find easier of the two."*

### **Rahim Khan-i-Khanan**

Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan (A.D. 1535-1627), nom de plume Rahiman, the greatest Muslim poet of Hindi, was a scholar of Sanskrit, Hindi, Persian and Arabic. His command over Bhasha was not less than Tulsi Das's and he was good at both Braj and Avadhi, southern and eastern dialects. He is claimed to be a "Poorana Kavi."<sup>42</sup>

His verses in fine, simple and charming words have a direct appeal to the heart. He puts his thoughts in easy flowing language, a language which is free from the terse Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic vocabulary. But his verses always carry a message and have a deep meaning. In small stanzas his verses are easy enough to be understood and remembered by casual readers. Rahim's *dohas* are full of life and activity. They are always true to nature. Even Bihari, one of the greatest poets, could not resist the temptation to borrow some of his ideas. His works are *Rahim Dohavali* or *Sat Sai*, *Barvai Nayika Bhed*, *Shringar Sorath*, *Madnashtakas* and *Ras Panchadhyayi*. Some other works such as *Nagar Shobha Phutkal Barvai*, *Phutkal Kavitta Savaiya* and *Rahim Ratnavali* were also written by him.

### **Puhakara and Sundar Das**

Puhakara Kavi, who flourished in 1616 A.D., composed *Rasa Ratana* in prison and was subsequently released. It is a love story of Rambhati and Sur Sen narrated in *chhandas*. It is worth mentioning that only a few writers like Jayasi have touched such topics.<sup>43</sup> Unlike other reformers, Sundar Das (fl. 1620 A.D.), a fine poet, lacked their spiritual experience as well as broad-mindedness. His chief work *Sundaravilasa* deals with the six philosophical systems of the Hindus and also their different paths of knowledge. Hriday Ram's (fl. 1623 A.D.) *Hanuman Natak* in *savaiyas* and *kavittas* is regarded as a unique work of the period.

**Sundar**

Sundar of Gwalior (fl. 1631 A.D.) was the most celebrated poet at Shahjahan's court. He was honoured with the title of *Maha Kavi Raya* or poet laureate. *Sundar Shringar*, his most admired work, is on the art of poetical composition in the Braj dialect. *Sinhasan Battisi* and *Barahamasa* are other well-known compositions by him.<sup>44</sup>

**Banarsi Das**

Banarsi Das (A.D. 1586-1641) was a well-known poet and author of several works. In the beginning he used to compose verses in *Shringar Rasa* but later on adopted the *Jnana* and *bhakti kavitas*. *Ardha Kathanaka* is his autobiography. His other compositions are *Banarsi Vilas* (collection of *phutkal* verses), *Natak Samayasar*, *Nam Mala*, and *Banarasi Padhati*.

**Dhruva Das**

Dhruva Das's (fl. 1643 A.D.) *dohas*, *chaupais*, *padas* and *savaiyas* all depict pure love and devotion. He was a voluminous writer and no less than forty *granth*s of his on various aspects of *Ishvara bhakti* are traceable. *Vrindavana Sata*, *Shringar Sata*, *Ras Ratnavali*, *Sukh manjari*, *Rati manjari*, *Bani Bihar* and *Rang Bihar* deserve mention. His celebrated *Bhakta Namavali*, containing an account of the saints up to his time, was composed by him on the lines of Nabhaji's famous *Bhaktamala*.<sup>45</sup>

**Banwari and Senapati**

Banwari (fl. 1643 A.D.) composed *Shringar Rasa* eulogising the bravery of Amar Singh, elder brother of Maharaja Jaswant Singh.<sup>46</sup> Sabal Singh Chouhan was the author of the *Mahabharata* in *dohas* and *chaupais*, *Ritu Samhar ka Bhasha Anuwada*, *Rup Vilas*, and a *pingul granth*.<sup>47</sup> *Kanakmanjari* was written by Kavi Kashi Ram under the patronage of Subedar Nizamat Khan. It is a story of Dhandhira Shah and Rani Kanakmanjari.

Senapati (A.D. 1589-1649) may rightly be styled as the "Indian Wordsworth" in his love for nature poetry. He surpassed all other Hindi poets in his wonderful description of the various Indian seasons, Deva Datta perhaps excepted. *Kavitta Ratnakara*, said to be his last *granth*, is the most celebrated.



*Kavya Kalpadrum* is also ascribed to him.<sup>48</sup> The following verses are by him :

महा मोह-कंदनि में जगत-जंकदनि में,  
 दिन दुख-दुदंनि में जात है बिहाय कै ।  
 सुख को न लेस है, कलेस सब भांतिन को,  
 सेनापति याही तें कहत अकुलाय कै ॥

*In the delusion and misery of the world time passes in distress. There is no trace of joy. On the contrary, there are all sorts of troubles. That is why Senapati is saying this distracted.*

#### Chintamani

Chintamani or Mani Mal Tripathi of Kanpur (fl. 1650 A.D.) is regarded as the greatest poet of his time and the creator of a new style of poetry. He is an acknowledged authority on the art of poetic composition. He wrote *Chhanda Vichar* at the instance of his patron Makarand Shah Bhonsala of Nagpur while at the Imperial court. He was held in high esteem by Shahjahan, who frequently rewarded him. *Kavikul Kalpataru*, *Ramayana*, *Kavya Prakash* and *Kavya Vivek* are his well-known works.<sup>49</sup> The following is a verse from one of his poems :

आँखिन मू दिबे के मिस आनि अचानक पोठि उरोज लगावै ।  
 कैहूं कहूं मुसकाय चितै अंगराय अनूपम अंग दिखावै ।  
 नाह छुई छल सों छतियाँ, हंसि भौह चढ़ाय अनंद बढ़ावै ।  
 जोबन के मद मत्त तिया हित सों पति को नित चित चुरावै ॥

*On the pretext of closing his eyes, she suddenly comes and touches his back with her breasts.. Sometimes she smiles and stretching her limbs flaunts her incomparable parts. When the husband beguiles her into allowing him to touch her breasts, she laughingly frowns. Thereby enjoyment is augmented. The wife in the bloom of her youth captivates the heart of her husband engagingly.*

#### Bihari, the incomparable

Supreme among those who gave a new turn to the old poetry by according the first place to the cultivation of art in

preference to devotion, stands Bihari Lal Chaube of Jaipur. *Sat Sai* (or seven hundred verses), his incomparable work, is one of the daintiest pieces of art to be found in any language. It was composed at the instance of his patron Mirza Raja Jai Singh whose deep respect for the great poet is ascribed to an incident. It is said that the Raja used to remain confined to his palace out of sheer love for his wives and consequently he paid no heed to the business of the State. The following *doha* of Bihari did the miracle, and sanity returned to the Raja. He was so much pleased with the poet that he awarded him an *ashrafi* for each one of his *dohas*.<sup>50</sup>

नहिं पराग नहिं मधुर मधु, नहिं विकास यहि काल ।

अली कली ही सों बंध्यो, आगे कौन हवाल ॥

*There is no pollen or sweet honey on the flowers. Nor are they in bloom. But the large black bee is bound to the bud. One wonders what would happen in future.*

*Bihari Sat Sai* is a collection of 700 *dohas*, all in the same metre. Each of these verses is an independent work of art and has no connection with what precedes or follows. No verse contains more than 46 syllables and yet it is a complete poem in itself. Working under such limitations, Bihari was able to produce 700 miniature pictures of great beauty and excellence by his sheer skill and felicity of expression. Grierson writes : "The elegance, poetic flavour and ingenuity of expression in this difficult task are considered to have been unapproached by any other poet." His skill in describing a natural phenomenon is inimitable.

He has been accused of "compression," but none can deny the fact that it is on his brevity, his ability to fit in a word when many would not have conveyed the sense, that the main interest and the fame of his work rest. To borrow the words of a critic :

सतसैया के दोहरे ज्यों नावक के तीर ।

देखत में छौटे लगें बेधें सकल सरोर ॥

(*Dohas* of *Sat Sai* are like small arrows which appear to be small, but the whole body is perforated.)

**Mati Ram**

Mati Ram (fl. 1664 A.D.) enjoyed the patronage of Bundi Rawal Bhava Singh. He dedicated his work *Chhanda Sara* to Maharaja Shambu Nath Solanki. *Ras Raj*, *Sahityasar* and *Lakshan Shringar* are some other works by him. His *Sat Sai*, composed on the lines of *Bihari Sat Sai*, is a work of unique interest. Free from superfluous words even for poetic effect, written in simple yet dignified language, it strictly follows the rules of poetic composition.<sup>51</sup>

**Bhushan**

Bhushan (17th century), brother of Chintamani, was honoured with the title of *Kavi Bhushan* by Rudra, Solanki Raja of Chitrakut. He remained for some time at the court of Shivaji, who held him in high esteem and rewarded him immensely. *Shiva Bhavani* and *Chhatarsal Dashakas* are his celebrated compositions. *Bhushan Ullas*, *Dushan Ullas* and *Bhushan Hazara* are also ascribed to him.<sup>52</sup> Bhushan holds a very eminent position among Hindu *kavis* especially for his encouragement to the ideas of Hindu glory for which Shivaji stood. He excelled in "tragic, heroic and terrible style."<sup>53</sup>

चकित चकत्ता चौकि चौकि उठै वार वार,  
दिल्ली दहसति चितै चाहि करषति है ॥

बिलखि वदन बिलखातं विजैपुर-पति,  
फिरत फिरंगिन की नारी फरकति है ॥

थर-थर कांपत कुतुबसाहिगोलकुंडा,  
हहरि हवस भूप-भीर भरकति है ॥

राजा सिवराज के नगारन की धाक सुनि,  
केते बादसाहन की छाती धरकति है ॥

*Hearing the tumult of the tymbals of King Sivaraja, the emperor of Delhi startles out of his sleep again and again. Seeing him, the ruler of Bijapur sobs. The English ladies suffer from palpitation. Quib, the ruler of Golkunda, trembles. Even the assembly of rulers quivers from fear. Many a ruler feels alarmed.*

### Jaswant Singh

Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Marwar, (c. 1625-81) was a poet of renown. *Bhasa Bhushan*, his celebrated *granth* on rhetoric, is composed after the style of *Chandralok*. It holds the same position among Hindi writings as *Chandralok* among Sanskrit works. It has the admirable feature of containing *lakshan* (signs) as well as *udaharana* (example) in the same *doha*. His other works are *Aproksh Siddhanta*, *Anubhava Prakash*, *Anand Vilas*, *Siddhanta Bodh*, *Siddhanta Sara* and *Probodh Chandrodaya Natak*. They are all in *padas*, and they deal with knowledge and Vedanta philosophy.<sup>54</sup>

### Lal Kavi

Lal Kavi or Gore Lal Purohit (c. A.D. 1648-1731) was a court poet of Maharaja Chhatrasal Bundela in whose honour he composed *Chhatra Prakash*,<sup>55</sup> a biographical account of Chhatrasal, his most celebrated *granth* in *dohas* and *chaupais*. He has given us a very graphic and truly historical sketch of the characters of Aurangzeb and Dara. He also gives us an account of the services rendered by Champat Rai under Dara at Qandhar.<sup>56</sup> He traces the genealogy and describes the traditional exploits of the dynasty. *Vishnu Vilas*, another book by him, is in *barvai chhandas*.<sup>57</sup>

### Sukh Dev and Guru Govind Singh

Kavi Raj Sukh Dev Misr (c. A.D. 1663-1703) is regarded as one of the masters of composition. His works are *Chhanda Vichar*, *Shringar Lata*, *Adhyatma Prakash*, *Dasarth Rava*, and *Ras Anarva*.<sup>58</sup>

Of all the guru poets, Guru Govind Singh (A.D. 1666-1708) was a true *kavi*. *Suniti Prakash*, *Sarva Loha Prakash*, *Prem Sumarga*, *Buddhi Sagar*, *Bichitra Natak* and *Chandi Charitra* are his well-known works. The last work describes the story of Goddess Durga in simple and fine verses.<sup>59</sup>

Alam (17th century) was another Hindi poet who flourished under the patronage of Muazzam. His most celebrated works in *phutkal* verses are on *Prem* and *Shringar*. His beloved Rangrezan also composed verses. Alam once wrote :

कनक छरी सी कामिनी काहे को कटि छीन ।

*The beautiful lady is like a golden wand but why her waist is slender.*

Rangrezan replied :

कटि को कंचन काटि बिधि कुचन मध्य धरि दीन ।

*Carving the gold from her waist the Creator inserted it in her breasts.*

**Deva Datta**

Deva Datta (c. A.D. 1673-1745) was a great poet and one of the most voluminous writers of his times. Not less than thirty of his *granth*s are even now available. He wrote in a very flowery and ornamented Braj Bhasha. Keay writes about him : "In his handling of rhymes, his drawing of comparisons, his knowledge of the sayings current amongst folk and his description of heroines who represent women typical of various parts of India, he is considered to have shown the greatest skill."

Azam Shah, the eldest son of Aurangzeb, greatly admired his verses in *Bhava Vilas*. Some fifty-two *granth*s are ascribed to him.<sup>60</sup> It was not an unusual thing for the poet to select verses from his old writings and compile them into new ones. Most of his verses are couched in fine and beautiful idiomatic words while some are in oft-repeated words and phrases. *Bhavani Vilas*, *Kushal Vilas*, and *Prem Chandrika* were composed after the names of Bhavani Dass Vaish, Kushal Singh and Raja Udyota Singh. *Jati Vilas* contains an account of the different countries he visited while *Rasa Vilas* was composed after the name of Raja Bhogi Lall. *Rag Ratanakar* is an account of poets and poetesses. Some of the other works are *Ashta Yama*, *Sujan Vinod*, *Prem Tarang*, *Ras Vilas*, *Sukh Sagar Tarang*, *Brahamdarshan Pachisi*, *Prem Dipika*, *Niti Shataka*, *Nakha Shikha*, *Prem Darshan*, etc.

## NOTES

1. The very few who have not followed the beaten track deal with *Ishvara maya*, *bhakti*, *puja*, etc.
2. The sacred Sikh *granth* in old Punjabi, with old Hindi extracts included in it, contains verses of *Vaishnava* saints and chiefly of Kabir and several *Sufis*, as Shaikh Farid of Pakpattan. The *Adi Granth* was put together by Guru Arjan. *Ency Brit.*, II, p. 573.
3. *BSOAS*, Vol. I, 1, 1917-20, pp. 119-23.
4. *Outline of Religious Literature of India*, p. 336.
5. *Hindi Shabd Sagar* (HSS), vol. I, p. 117; *Hindi Sahitya ka Itihas* (HSI) by Ram Chandra Shukla, p. 201
6. *HSS*, I, p. 117; *HSI*, p. 201.
7. (a) A specimen of the *Padmavat* by Grierson, *ASB*, 1893, pt. I, pp. 127-181.  
 (b) *Vernacular Literature of Hindustan* (VLH) by Grierson, pp. 15-18.  
 (c) *India's Past* by Macdonnell, Oxford, p. 223.  
 (d) *BSOAS*, I, 1917-20, pp. 119-23.  
 (e) *History of Hindi Literature*, F.E. Keay, p. 32.  
 (f) *HSS*, I, pp. 84-87.  
 (g) *HSI*, p. 104.  
 (h) Translation of *Padmavat* by Sir George Grierson and Pandit Sudhakara Dvivedi in *ASB*, N.S., I, No. 877, pp. 15-16. Husain Ghaznavi wrote a Persian poem entitled *Qissa-e-Padmavat* on the subject.
8. *HSS*, I, pp. 84-87.
9. *HSI*, p. 104.
10. Keay, op. cit., p. 32.
11. *HSS*, I, p. 117
12. *HSS*, I, p. 108; *HSI*, p. 171.
13. *VLH*, p. 21
14. *HSS*, I, p. 108; *HSI*, p. 172; *VLH*, p. 25.
15. *HSS*, I, p. 113; *HSI*, p. 188; *VLH*, p. 28.
16. *HSS*, I, p. 118.
17. *VLH*, p. 39.
18. *HSI*, p. 202; *VLH*, p. 39; *HSS*, I, p. 118.
19. *HSI*, p. 191; *HSS*, I, p. 114; *VLH*, p. 28.

20. *HSS*, I, p. 109; *HSI*, p. 175; *VLH*, p. 25.
21. *VLH*, p. 29.
22. "All others are simply founders but Nand Das is the artificer." *VLH*, pp. 25-26; *BSOAS*, I, 1917-20, p. 109; *HSS*, I, p. 107; *HSI*, p. 169.
23. *VLH*, p. 26.
24. *HSS*, I, p. 121; *HSI*, p. 210; Keay, p. 36; *VLH*, p. 37.
25. *Ain*, I (Bloch), p. 442; *Maasir*, II, p. 161; *HSS*, I, p. 119; *HSI*, p. 206; *VLH*, pp. 35-36.
26. *VLH*, pp. 21-22.
27. Grierson writes: "Other poets may have equalled him in some particular quality but he combines the best qualities of all." *VLH*, p. 25.
28. According to Grierson, he flourished in 1560 A.D. *VLH*, p. 28; *HSI*, p. 177; *Religious Literature of India*, p. 318; *HSS*, I, pp. 109-110 for verses, etc.
29. *Dadu Dayal ki Bani*, p. 186, *VLH*, p. 67.
30. According to Grierson, he flourished in 1580 A.D. *VLH*, p. 58.
31. *HSI*, pp. 215-16; *HSS*, I, pp. 121-23.
32. According to Grierson, he flourished in 1580 A.D. Keay, p. 37; *HSS*, I, p. 121; *HSI*, p. 211.
33. *HSI*, p. 192; *VLH*, p. 31.
34. *HSS*, I, pp. 114-115.
35. "Muslim Poets and Hindi Literature," K. Mukerjee, Art. in *New Asia*, July 1940, No. 3, pp. 6-7.
36. *VLH*, p. 27
37. The account is based on the following sources: *VLH*, pp. 43-45; *HSI*, p. 125; *HSS*, I, pp. 97-99; Smith, *Akbar the Great*, p. 420; *India's Past*, Macdonnell, p. 226; Wilson, *Religious Sects of the Hindus*, p. 63; *Religious Literature of India*, p. 329; *BSOAS*, London, Vol I, pp. 113-120 (1917-20); The Prologue to the Ramayana of Tulsi Das by Growse, *ASB*, 1876, p. 2; Frazer, *Indian Culture*, p. 367.
38. "He was a master of all the varieties from the simplest flowing narration to the most complex verses." *VLH*, p. 47.
39. *VLH*, pp. 45-46.
40. A collection of 279 hymns to Lord Rama.

41. Collection of omens connected with the life of Lord Rama.
42. *HSS*, I, pp. 124-26; *HSI*, pp. 221-23.
43. *HSI*, p. 237; *HSS*, I, p. 128.
44. *HSI*, p. 238; *VLH*, pp. 60-61; Keay, p. 39. Garcin de Tassy ascribes another work called *Sundar Vidya* to him.
45. *HSS*, I, p. 116; *HSI*, p. 195. The names of forty *granth*s are written.
46. *HSI*, pp. 366-67.
47. *Ibid*, p. 368.
48. *HSS*, I, p. 127; *HSI*, p. 232; Keay, p. 40.
49. Keay, p. 42; *VLH*, p. 71.
50. *VLH*, pp. 75-76.
51. *HSS*, I, p. 139; *VLH*, p. 62; Keay, p. 42; *HSI*, p. 263.
52. *HSS*, I, pp. 139-40.
53. *VLH*, p. 61.
54. *HSS*, I, p. 135; Keay, p. 44.
55. Published by Nagari Pracharini Sabha, Varanasi.
56. Qanungo, *Dara Shikoh*, p. 416-17.
57. *HSS*; I, p. 175; *VLH*, p. 77.
58. *HSS*, I, p. 142; *VLH*, p. 66.
59. *HSS*, I, p. 174; *HSI*, 376.
60. *VLH*, p. 60; *HSS*, I, p. 144; *HSI*, p. 281. According to Grierson, he wrote about seventy works.



## Appendix

The following is a list of the Persian books studied in *madrasas* during the Mughal period :<sup>1</sup>

### PROSE

Ruqqat-i-Abul Fazl ; Letters of Chandra Bhan Brahman ; Letters of Mulla Munir; Insha-i-Yusufi; Insha-i-Madho Ram; Handbook of Shaikh Inayat Ullah; Insha-i- Khalifa; Bahar-i-Sukhan by Shaikh Muhammad Salih; Kheyalat-i-Nadir; Dastur-us-Sibyan; Epistles of Shaida and Mulla Tughra; Story of Lall Chand; Lilavati translated by Shaikh Faizi.

### POETRY

Firdausi's Shahnama. Poems of Amir Khusrau—Qiranus Sadain, Matla-ul-Anwar and Ijaz-i-Khusravi.

Mulla Jami's works—Yusuf Zulaikha, Tuhfatu-i-Ahrar, Nuzhatu-I-Abrar. Nizami's works—Sikandarnama, Makhzanu-I-Asrar, Haft Paikar, Shirin Khusrau, Laila Majnun. Diwans of Hafiz, Khaqani, Anwari, Shams-i-Tabriz, Zahir-i-Faryabi, Sadi and Salih. Qasaid of Badr-i-Chach, Urfi and Faizi.

### FICTION

Tuti-nama of Nakshabi; Anwar-i-Suhaili of Husain Waiz Kashifi; Iyar-i-Danish of Shaikh Abul Fazl; Bahar-i-Danish of Inayatullah; Seh Nasr of Zuhuri.

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1. These books are not given in the order in which they were taught. The course refers to the 17th century. The list has been compiled from the following sources : *Khulasatu-i-Maktib* (MS) ; *Chahar Chaman* ; *Gul-i-Raana* ; *Islamic Culture*, April 1945 ; *Sher-ul-Ajam* III (1922), pp. 149-50 ; *Adbiat-i-Farsi Main Hinduon ka Hissa*, pp. 239-42.

**HISTORY**

Zafarnama-i-Kangra by Raja Husain; Akbarnama of Abul Fazl; Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri; Zafarnama of Sharaf-ud-din Ali Yazdi; Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi; Razmnama (translation of Mahabharata).

**ETHICS**

Akhlaq-i-Nasiri; Akhlaq-i-Jalali, Akhlaq-i-Muhasini; Works of Sharaf-ud-din Maniri; Nuzhatu-l-Arwah; Masnavi of Maulana Rum; Hadiqah of Sanai.

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4. Monserrate, S. J. (1580-83) : *The commentary*, trans. from Latin by J.S. Hoyland, annotated by S.N. Banerji, 1922, Oxford University Press.
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6. Ralph Fitch (1583-91) : *England's Pioneer to India, Burma etc.*, edited by J.H. Riley. Also in *Early Travels in India* (1583-1619), edited by William Foster, Oxford, 1921. My references are usually to the latter.
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8. John Mildenhall (1606) : *The Travels into Indies and in the countries of Persia and of the Great Mogor or Mogull*, Purchas, II, pp. 229-304.
9. Pyrard, Francois (1608-9) : *The Voyage to the East Indies, the Maldives, etc.*, translated into English

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11. Lancaster, Sir James (1610-11): *A Jourual kept in the Fourth Voyage in the Voyages of Sir James Lancaster and a Journal kept in the Sixth Voyage, April 1610-January 1611, in the Voyages of Sir James Lancaster in Purchas, IV, pp. 214-15.*

12. Middleton, Sir Henry (1610-11): *Account of the Sixth Voyage set forth by the East India Company in three ships in Purchas, III, pp. 115-94.*

13. Salbancke, Master Joseph (1610): *The Voyage through India, Persia, Part of Turkey, the Persian Gulf and Arabia (1609-1610) in Purchas, III, pp. 89-92.*

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